

# Chapter 106 One Hundred Thousand Dollars For An Abortion

Rachel stared at Alicia calmly. The emotion behind her steely gaze was unfathomable.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Alicia asked in a nervous voice. "Eat. These are the specialties of this restaurant."

Rachel put on a smile, picked up her chopsticks, and reached for the edible amaranth with garlic.

Meanwhile, Alicia stared at the pair of chopsticks in Rachel's hand. She was so nervous that she tightened her grip on her own set of chopsticks.

After talking with Lori, Alicia did some research regarding food that pregnant women should avoid. She found on one of the articles online that amaranths were terrible for pregnant women, as they were more likely to have a miscarriage after consuming a certain amount, especially during the early stages of pregnancy. If Rachel was truly pregnant, there was no way she would dare to touch this dish.

But now, she picked some up with her chopsticks and put them into her bowl without so much as batting an eyelash.

'Isn't she supposed to be pregnant?

This can't be! What if she is pregnant and has no idea that these amaranths are harmful for pregnant ladies? If she really eats amaranths and something bad happens to her, how am I ever going to explain this to Victor?

No, that's impossible. If Rachel knows that she's pregnant, she probably already knew what food she could and could not eat.'

Alicia's mind was filled with different thoughts. It somehow felt like there were two personas arguing in her mind. Rachel noticed the struggle and confusion on Alicia's face. Rachel's gaze turned sharp, but her hand didn't stop.

Just when Rachel was about to stuff the amaranth into her mouth, Alicia suddenly got up and knocked away the chopsticks from her hand.

Click!

Not long after, the chopsticks fell to the ground, rolling to the feet of the stranger on the next table.

Unsure of what to say, Alicia stammered, "I, um... I saw a bug on your chopsticks just now."

"A bug, huh?" Rachel cast her sight upon the chopsticks that had fallen.

Alicia averted her gaze, grabbed a tissue to wipe away her sweat, and acted naturally. "Yes, that's right."

"In that case, I'll ask the waiter to get me another pair of chopsticks." Rachel was about to

ring the bell to call the waiter in, but before her hand could touch the bell, Alicia swooped in to grab it.

And because of that, Rachel's eyes turned to Alicia.

Alicia caught sight of Rachel's gaze, and her palms were sweating a lot. There was no trace of emotion in Rachel's eyes, but it made people feel a sense of trepidation. It somehow appeared as though Rachel had seen through Alicia's motives for quite some time now. Meanwhile, Alicia was feeling guiltier by the second, and it looked like she was out of breath.

"There really was a bug on that pair of chopsticks, which means that the hygiene of this restaurant isn't very good. You shouldn't get a new pair, because chances are, there's gonna be another bug on it. Or maybe bugs have crawled all over it!" Alicia stammered. She pursed her lips, and reached for her purse, and said, "We should go to another restaurant. I'm worried we might get food poisoning here or something."

Having said that, Alicia was about to leave.

However, Rachel stopped her. "Alicia, hold on."

Alicia paused to look at her. "What... what's the matter?"

Rachel leaned back, wearing a faint smile. Alicia's nervous face and unnatural expression was reflected in Rachel's clear, dark eyes. Then, Rachel glanced at the dishes on the table and calmly said, "Amaranth, barley, king crab, soft-shelled turtle. That's quite a lot, you know! You must've been planning this lunch for a long time, but now, you suddenly can't wait to leave before I even get a bite? Do you have to be in such a hurry? Personally, I don't think this restaurant is unclean, and I'm sure that I won't suffer through food poisoning. There's no need to go to another restaurant. It's too wasteful!"

After saying that, Rachel took a spoonful of barley and red bean porridge with a calm look on her face.

The moment Alicia saw that Rachel was really going to eat the porridge, she immediately grabbed the spoon from her hand, causing the food to spill all over the table; some of it even spilled on the back of Alicia's hand. She felt the burning sensation, but she didn't have the luxury to care about it. "Rachel, are you crazy?" she screamed. "I just told you that the food here is unclean!"

Rachel chuckled at that remark. "Is it though? Or are you worried that something might happen to me after eating these dishes because I may or may not be pregnant? And in so doing, you won't be able to explain it to Victor. Is that right?"

Alicia's eyes widened upon hearing this. After a long time, she finally found her voice. "Are you really pregnant?"

Rachel's face turned serious because of that question.

The very second she saw the dishes on the table, Rachel had already figured out Alicia's purpose of inviting her to lunch. However, she did think of two possible explanations. One was that Alicia wanted her to have a miscarriage, and the other was that Alicia wanted to

confirm the truth of her pregnancy.

And now, Rachel had confirmed that her second theory was right.

'But who told Alicia that I'm pregnant?

Was it Alice?

That's unlikely. Alice is too busy saving her own ass, and she probably has no time to collude with Alicia. Besides, Alicia was born in a scholarly, well-mannered family. She despised mistresses, so she wouldn't be hanging out with the likes of Alice, a mistress' daughter. That's also why Alicia cut off contact with Victor after we got married. It's her way of upholding her pride as the lady of the Schultz family.

Maybe Victor told her?

Nah, that's impossible.'

Rachel quickly denied that possibility. If it really was Victor who told Alicia, then there was no need for this woman to test her, albeit, this method was quite idiotic.

Alicia realized that Rachel had seen through her gimmick, so she decided not to pretend anymore and sat down. "So, tell me, is that child really Victor's?"

Rachel took a sip of lemonade and answered, "Answer my question first, and then I'll tell you."

Alicia frowned. "Why should I answer your question?"

"If you don't want to answer, it's fine. And for that matter, we have nothing left to talk about." Rachel didn't seem worried. She just smiled, and pretended to leave. "If anyone asks me about what happened during this lunch, all I can tell them is the truth," she said.

'She's going to tell the truth?

To whom? Is she talking about Victor?'

Alicia's mind was racing, and it was gradually agitating her. "Rachel, don't you dare."

Rachel just glanced at her, raising her eyebrows without saying a word.

Alicia glared at Rachel, gnashing her teeth to the point that they might shatter. It took her some time before she managed to contain her ire. "What do you want to know?"

"Who told you that I'm pregnant?"

Alicia fell silent for a moment before she replied, "I just figured it out by myself." Alicia averted her gaze from Rachel. "What's the matter? Do you think I'm that incapable?"

Rachel smirked and said nothing.

Seconds later, Alicia cleared her throat and broke the silence. "Now, it's your turn to answer my question. Is your child..."

"Since you're so good at guessing, why not take another guess?" Rachel interrupted her casually.

"You!" Alicia had no rebuttal to Rachel's remark. Her face turned livid, but she managed to regain her composure the following second. She then took a deep breath, took out a bank

card from her purse, and placed it on the table while looking at Rachel. "Fine! I don't care who the father of your baby is! There's one hundred thousand dollars in this account. Go get an abortion!"

Upon hearing that, Rachel flashed Alicia a cold smile, which sent shivers down the latter's spine.

"Uh... Why are you smiling?"

"Miss Schultz, that's quite a generous offer. One hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money to pay for an abortion," Rachel said indifferently as she picked up the card.

Alicia raised her chin proudly. "I know the situation of the Bennet family, and I'm well aware that you need the cash. After you get an abortion, I can give you another five million dollars as compensation—wait! Rachel, what the hell are you doing?!"

She didn't even get to finish her sentence when she suddenly sprang to her feet with eyes widened in disbelief.

Rachel had snapped the bank card in half.

## Chapter 107 Meeting Roger

Rachel glared at Alicia coldly; her stare was like icy daggers piercing through Alicia's skin. Rachel said, "I don't know who told you that I'm pregnant, but you are out of your mind if you think mere a hundred thousand dollars is going to be enough to cover an abortion!"

Rachel said, then stood up and left.

Alicia stood staring at the place where Rachel had been sitting. She clenched and loosened her fists several times to try and calm herself down. Then she turned and ran after Rachel. She grabbed her sleeve and tugged her a stop. "How much do you want then?" she asked.

Rachel stopped and glared down at her.

Alicia was starting to sound desperate. "How much is enough for you to leave Victor? The two of you are divorced for goodness sake! Do you really think he'll take you back, just because you're pregnant with his child? I can tell you right now that he won't! There is no way that it will happen! I, for one, will not allow that to happen. How much do you want for the abortion and for you to leave him? Ten million? Thirty million? Just name your price and I will make it happen!"

Alicia's voice quivered with every word she said. She was becoming more and more anxious by the second. Her hand tightened on Rachel's clothes in an almost vice-like grip.

Time seemed to slow as the two of them stared at each other. There was no other sound aside from Alicia's heavy, nervous breathing.

"Alicia, if you're so certain that Victor will never take me back, even though I'm pregnant with his child, then what are you so afraid of?" Rachel stared down at her expressionlessly as she said this, but then she continued with a smile, "If you're afraid that Victor and I will get back together, then why did you stop me from eating the food? Even if I lost this baby, I don't think Victor would do anything to you, for your grandfather's sake. If you'd just let me eat the food, you wouldn't have had to try and bribe me to have an abortion now."

"I... It was a test! I just wanted to see if you really are pregnant, or if you were lying. I didn't actually want you to eat the food in the first place!" Alicia glared at her coldly. "No matter how badly I want you to have that abortion, I'm not going to use such evil tricks to get my way. Don't think so badly of me. I'll give you the money for the abortion; as long as you promise to go through with it. I think that's a fair deal, don't you?" she said arrogantly.

It was the first time Rachel realized that Alicia actually had some type of moral compass. There was something rather charming about it. But not in an alluring way, more like childish and stupid. It wasn't the first time Rachel wondered how she had managed to become a post-graduate student if she was so simple and naive.

But just because she had morals, didn't mean that Rachel could forgive her for all the terrible things she had done.

Rachel wasn't that kind-hearted.

She narrowed her eyes at Alicia and said in a sarcastic tone, "Such a pity then! You missed out on a great opportunity!"

"What... What do you mean?" Alicia's eyebrows furrowed in confusion and she frowned.

"Don't try to change the subject. You still haven't told me how much money you want."

"I mean the chance to get rid of my baby," Rachel snapped and took a step closer to her.

"Would you like to know what the price is for me to have an abortion?"

Alicia unconsciously took a step back, suddenly scared by Rachel's attitude.

"I'll tell you now." Rachel stepped even closer to her and whispered into her ear, "My baby is priceless."

She didn't wait to see Alicia's reaction, or hear whatever it was she was going to try and say.

Rachel snapped around and marched out the restaurant.

Alicia's expression switched between scared, shocked and then finally, horror. She had to change Rachel's mind. She hurried to catch up with her, but just as she was about to grab her again, Rachel turned around. "There's one thing you can be certain of," Rachel said.

"What?"

"I will never take Victor back, even if that bastard begs me." Then she left, leaving Alicia to stand and stare in a daze at the spot where she'd been standing.

As Rachel exited the restaurant, the man who'd been sitting at the table behind Rachel and Alicia's table, stood up. He grabbed the brim of his cap and pulled it over his eyes to cover his face and also left.

No one noticed anything, and no one thought it was suspicious.

Up in one of the bedrooms of the the Sullivan family's mansion, Maria was busy with a phone call.

She was dressed in a lacy nightdress and a thin silken gown. The material hung flatteringly on her figure, making her look enticing, even in her nightwear.

Her phone was laying screen up on the table. It displayed the name of the caller, the duration of the call, and the highlighted speaker phone option.

"Are you sure you heard correctly? Did she truly admit that she's pregnant with Victor's child?" Maria asked.

"I'm certain of what I heard, Madam," said a smooth, respectful male voice from the other end of the line.

Maria picked up a bracelet and held it up in front of her face. Her eyes glinted with a murderous light as she said, "Keep an eye on her. Find an opportunity to confirm what you heard."

"Yes, Madam!"

Maria ended the call and locked her phone. She selected a necklace from her array of jewelry and turned to the housekeeper standing behind her. "Will you put it on for me?"

The housekeeper nodded and took the necklace from her. She looped it over Maria's neck and fastened it at the back. "Mrs. Sullivan, if Rachel really is pregnant, do you think we should kidnap her and force her to have an abortion?"

"We can't kidnap her. Haven't you heard? She's got two permanent bodyguards protecting her now. Well, those are the two we can see anyway. It's impossible to tell how many she really has hiding in the shadows." Maria pinched the pendant between her fingers. She rolled it thoughtfully then said with a sneer, "I don't think my men will stand a chance if that's the case. I'll have to come up with a detailed plan and make sure everything goes according to that. There is no room for mistakes."

After her encounter with Alicia, Rachel returned to the square where the International Food Festival was in full swing. She really had wasted a lot of time talking to Alicia. It was already lunch time and she was feeling quite hungry now.

She was about to start looking through the food stalls for something tasty to eat, but stopped when someone called her name.

"Rachel!"

She turned at the sound of the familiar voice. It was Roger. He was approaching her with Riley in his arms. "I didn't think I would see you here."

Riley's large, innocent eyes lit up when she saw Rachel. She managed to stop licking the large lollipop she was holding just long enough to say, "Auntie!"

'Auntie?

First this child calls me Mommy, and now Auntie?' Rachel thought.

Riley leaned away from Roger and reached out her arms towards Rachel. She opened and closed her hands repeatedly, asking for a hug. "Auntie!" she kept murmuring over and over again.

Roger blinked in surprise. But his surprise only lasted a moment, because he remembered Riley's reaction from two days ago when she had seen the photo of him and Rachel on his desk. The little girl had pointed at Rachel and called her mommy. Riley had met Rachel before, so when she had called Rachel "mommy", he had corrected her, and told her that this was Rachel, not her mother. He also told her that this was the woman he liked, and had then sighed softly saying, "Perhaps, if I was a little braver, she may have been your auntie now."

He never could have expected that Riley would remember the word "auntie" after only hearing it once.

"Auntie, hold me," Riley said sweetly, stretching her arms out even further towards Rachel. Looking at Riley's innocent little face, Rachel simply couldn't say no. She smiled softly and lifted Riley out of Roger's arms. She held her gently, swaying from side to side in a rocking motion. Since when had she gotten so soft? Perhaps it was because she was pregnant with her own baby that her maternal instincts were so strong.

"You smell good, auntie," Riley cooed.

"I'm not your auntie, Riley," Rachel said gently and pinched Riley's round cheek.

Roger had been smiling as he was watching them, but when he heard what Rachel said, his eyes dimmed a little. "My apologies, Rachel. I think Riley got a little confused when she saw the photo on my desk of the two of us in high school. I think she misinterpreted our relationship."

"You have a photo of us?" Rachel asked in confusion.

"Yeah, it was that time when our school held a sports meeting. We were both juniors in our second years. It's okay if you don't remember it; it was a long time ago," Roger said in a soft, gentle voice. He was smiling warmly at her, but there was a slight sadness hidden within.

After Roger explained, Rachel understood. Her eyes widened in surprise. "I didn't think you would keep that photo... But please, there is no need for you to apologize to me. It's not the first time Riley has called me something I'm not."

Roger just smiled in response, managing to hide his bitter feelings.

That was the only photo he had of the two of them together; of course he had kept it safe.

"I've kept all the photos of our old classmates throughout high school. Call me nostalgic, but I just can't help it. Photos hold so many memories...." Roger said. He raised his head to look her in the eye. "Why are you here alone?"

'Surely Victor should be with you, right?'

He was about to voice his thoughts but managed to stop himself in time. It wasn't his place to ask.



# Chapter 108 Uncle And Aunt Should Be Together

"Is it so strange to be strolling alone and enjoying the food festival?" Rachel said casually. Then, she glanced at Roger and asked, "But I'm curious about something. Why did you take Riley with you? Where is Dr. Jimenez?"

"My sister originally planned to come with us, but she went back to pick up our parents, so I brought Riley here with me first," Roger explained, taking Riley from her arms. "Let me carry her. Besides, it's not convenient for you to carrying anything considering your condition."

"Alright then. I hope they arrive soon though. I'll have to go," Rachel said, rubbing her sore arms. She had been carrying Riley for a while now. All of a sudden, the aromatic fragrance coming from the nearby food stalls wafted into her nose, which made her feel starving. She then turned around, ready to grab a bite somewhere.

However, Roger stopped her. "Hang on."

"What is it?" Rachel turned back to look at him. "Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?" Subconsciously, Roger tightened his hold on Riley, and tried to speak in a more casual tone. "Rachel, you've only just arrived, right? If you don't mind, perhaps we can walk around here together."

Rachel was standing a few paces from him. The autumn sunshine was bright, but not dazzling. The brilliant sunshine fell on her body, and for a moment, it appeared as though she was coated by a warm halo. At the same time, the cool, autumn breeze blew past them, causing her hair to flutter along.

Roger was mesmerized by her beauty. Every memory he had of her came crashing into his mind, and he remembered the first time he ever laid eyes on her.

They had just enrolled into senior high school. The freshmen needed to receive military training before the start of the semester, so at the end of August, they all received a notice to go through the enrollment procedures in advance. Afterwards, the freshmen were made to participate in a week-long military training camp.

Since Roger had been a consistent top student, many parents and teachers had heard of him, and they regarded him as a role model for his peers. Aside from that, he was a handsome, modest gentleman borne in a rich and powerful family. Naturally, he attracted a lot of attention on his first day in school.

During the first day of military training, he and Rachel were selected to give a speech onstage on behalf of all the freshmen, because of their outstanding performance in the training. Their instructor had woken them up early in the morning, and told them to recite the manuscript on the field. It was just before the break of dawn, and the wind was quite chilly. Roger was carrying the two manuscripts as he made his way towards the field from

the boy's dormitory.

He saw two figures standing amidst the field from a distance. He gathered that it must be Rachel and their instructor. However, they were standing a little far, so he couldn't see them that well, and he couldn't tell which one was Rachel. During the duration of the summer vacation before he officially became a senior high school student, he had been curious of Rachel's personality.

Now that he had an opportunity to get to know her, he subconsciously quickened his pace. Just before he was able to see Rachel clearly, the first ray of sunshine broke through the clouds and shone down on her countenance.

She was wearing a camouflage uniform, along with a green army T-shirt inside. The corners of her top were tucked into her camo trousers, making her look even more slender. The second sunshine fell on her shoulder, Roger could see her face clearly.

'She's beautiful,' he thought.

That was the very first impression he had of Rachel the moment he saw her.

Ever since he was a boy, he had been pursued by numerous girls. He had seen his fair share of pretty girls, including his sister, the prima donna of the upper class. He had thought that nobody could be more beautiful than Clara, until the moment he saw Rachel.

Rachel's facial features were delicate, feminine, and neat. Whenever she was smiling, her eyebrows and eyes curved into perfect crescents. She wasn't wearing any accessories, and the camo outfit she was wearing was plain, but it didn't diminish her beauty.

Never did Roger imagine that the first time he would lay eyes on Rachel would render him unable to forget her for the next nine years.

"Didn't you mention that you're waiting for Dr. Jimenez and your parents? I don't wanna impose on you." She was losing interest in the food festival because of the incident between her and Alicia earlier. She had planned to go home after getting something to eat. If she were to accept Roger's invitation, she would have to meet people from the Jimenez family. She figured it wasn't a good idea, considering all the rumors about the Jimenez family and Sullivan family.

Roger lowered his gaze, hiding his disappointment. He immediately understood that Rachel declined his offer indirectly, so he didn't insist anymore. He just put on a smile and said, "I see. Be careful out there."

"Thank you."

With that, Rachel turned around and left. Meanwhile, Roger stood frozen, and watched her gradually disappear from his sight.

All of a sudden, Riley struggled violently in his arms. Roger was pulled back to his senses.

"What's wrong, Riley?"

"Auntie..." Riley pointed at Rachel.

"Silly Riley, I share the sentiment. I also hope she can be your aunt, but it's a pity that she's

not." Roger couldn't help but smile helplessly. He freed one of his hand to touch the little girl's head. "Let's go see if your mommy and granny have arrived, shall we?"

Then, he looked at Rachel's receding figure again. He tried his best to suppress the bitterness he was feeling, and turned around to walk in the opposite direction.

Riley stared at Roger's face. She didn't understand what her uncle meant, but she could tell he was sad, and she knew that it was because of Rachel.

She was in her uncle's arms, so she could see Rachel's receding back.

'I don't want Uncle Roger to be sad.

He was really happy when he saw auntie just now. Maybe if she comes back, Uncle Roger will be happy again!'

When that thought crossed Riley's mind, she struggled to break free again. "Uncle, I, um... I want... walk."

Roger paused to look at Riley in confusion. "Riley, did you just tell me that you want to walk by yourself?"

Riley nodded fervently. "W... walk!"

Roger noticed that she was struggling to break free, and it worried him that she might fall down, so he had no choice but to gently put her down. "In that case, you need to hold my hand tight... Riley!"

The second her feet touched the ground, she turned around and ran away before Roger even had the chance to hold her hand. In a matter of seconds, she had managed to run a few meters away from him.

There were food stalls on both sides of the road. And because of that, the district was crowded. Roger could only elbow his way through the crowd, chasing down Riley with difficulty. However, she was a little girl, so it was very easy for her to traverse through the crowd.

"Riley! Come back!" Roger shouted.

Riley ignored him and even sped up, focusing on Rachel ahead of her.

"Riley!"

At this time, Rachel was reading the menu in front of a food stall when she heard someone shouting Riley's name. She frowned, unsure if her ears were deceiving her.

'Riley?

It couldn't be the little girl I met, could it? But she's with Roger right now, so I must have misheard.'

While Rachel was lost in thought, a small girl suddenly came to her. Before she could see the child clearly, the little girl had latched onto her right leg. "Auntie!" the girl called out sweetly. Rachel was taken by surprise as she didn't expect Riley to appear here.

'If she's here, then who's calling her name?'

Rachel looked towards the direction of the voice. And not ten paces away, Roger was there, anxiously walking towards them.

"Auntie!" Riley called her again when she noticed that Rachel wasn't responding.

Now that Roger had caught up with his niece, he was surprised to see her holding onto Rachel's leg. He had no idea that Riley bolted out of the blue because she wanted to look for Rachel.

"Riley, come here." Roger said gently.

But Riley refused to move. Instead, she kept holding onto Rachel and looked up at her. "Uncle and auntie, together."

She thought that as long as Uncle Roger was with Rachel, he would no longer be sad. That was the reason she was so determined to ask Rachel to stay.

Both Roger and Rachel were too stunned to react because of what Riley had said.

"Riley, now be a good girl and come here," he said while looking at the little girl. He was the first to react between the two of them. Then, he glanced at Rachel and noticed that she didn't have any reactions to Riley's remark. To be honest, it made his heart sink.

Riley shook her head stubbornly. "Together!"

"Rachel, I'm so sorry about this. I had no idea that Riley would..."

"It's fine. Let's walk around together, shall we?" Rachel had gotten ahold of herself. Frankly, it was hard for her to refuse Riley. "I'll go home when Dr. Jimenez and your parents have arrived."

For a moment, Roger was dazed. The following second, his eyes lit up, and a smile found its way to his lips. "Great."

# Chapter 109 Riley Is Missing

Roger and Rachel walked together through all the various stalls set up at the festival. He held Riley in his arms, talking casually as they explored all the sights and different foods. Every single dish that fascinated Rachel, he bought for her. Her hands were soon full of various containers and packets, and they'd only visited half of the stalls!

While she was enjoying herself, Rachel couldn't help that she was starting to feel tired. She stifled a yawn behind her hand and rubbed her eyes.

Roger immediately noticed her fatigue. He'd been paying close attention to her the entire time. He shifted Riley in his arms and leaned closer to speak to her so he'd be heard over the crowds. "We've been walking forever. I think it's time we found somewhere to sit and rest. Don't you?"

Rachel swept her gaze through the milling crowds and nodded.

Luckily for them, there was a rest stop every 10 stalls. It wasn't long until they found one and settled down. Roger put Riley down so his arms could rest, then turned to speak to Rachel. He noticed her face was pale. "Are you tired?" he asked. "Because you look exhausted. I think we should rest here for a while and then I'll drive you back home."

Rachel sipped at the orange juice in her hand and watched Riley. The child was looking around curiously, taking in all the different sights around her. Then she looked up at Roger. "When is Dr. Jimenez getting here?"

Roger was right, she was tired. She felt like she needed a nap. Because of her pregnancy, she got tired easily and the smell of food sometimes made her feel sick. She had been fine at first, but the longer she'd stayed at the festival, the more difficult it had become for her to fight against her body.

The only thing stopping her from leaving was Riley.

She didn't want to disappoint her. Again, she wondered when she had gotten so soft... It must be because she was pregnant. If it weren't for that, she probably would have left already. 1

Roger's cheeks flushed pink in embarrassment at her question. He dipped his hand into his pocket to brush his fingers against his phone.

Right at that moment, it started to vibrate. Someone was calling him.

Instead of answering the call, he felt along the side of the phone until his fingers ran over the button on the side. He held it down until his phone buzzed once and turned off.

"My sister hasn't called me yet. I think there might be an emergency at the hospital... My guess is that she's going to be stuck there for a little while. I don't think she will be joining us any time soon." Roger removed his hand from his pocket and let his arm fall loosely to his side. "If you want to go home, I'll take you back. Once you're safe and resting, Riley and I

will come back here and carry on waiting," he said to Rachel.

"No, it's alright. I said I'd leave once Dr. Jimenez gets here. I'm sure I can wait a little longer," Rachel said pleasantly.

Guilt panged painfully in Roger's chest. He knew that phone call he'd just received was probably from his sister. But he also knew that Rachel would leave if she knew Clara and their parents had arrived.

He wanted her to stay with him, just a little bit longer.

So he'd lied.

Just as the feelings of guilt began to overwhelm him, a vendor started shouting, "Whiskey heart chocolate bar! Get your whiskey heart chocolate bar!" <sup>1</sup>

Roger turned his head in the direction of the sound. A smile spread across his face as an idea formed in his head. "Rachel," he said slowly as he turned back to her, "would you mind watching Riley for a few minutes?"

"What?" Rachel hadn't even comprehended what he had said before he disappeared into the crowds. She was left staring at the empty space where he'd been standing.

Rachel pouted in thought, but was quickly distracted from Roger's odd behavior when Riley hopped off the chair and walked shyly up to her. Her little face was pinched in embarrassment, and she was fiddling with her fingers.

"What's the matter? Is there something wrong, Riley?" Rachel asked in a gentle, compassionate tone. She could see the little girl wanted to tell her something.

"Pee..."

Riley said in such a soft voice that Rachel didn't hear her the first time. Rachel got off the chair and crouched down in front of her. "What did you say, Riley?" she asked calmly.

Riley's cheeks went red with embarrassment. She threw her little arms around Rachel's neck and whispered into her ear, "Pee-pee..."

Then she buried her head in Rachel's neck.

Rachel was confused for a moment, but then quickly realized what the little girl was asking. She giggled softly, smiled and then scooped her into her arms. "You want to go to the restroom?"

Riley raised her head and looked shyly up at Rachel. She blinked her large, dollish eyes and nodded.

Rachel gently pinched her cheek. "What are you so embarrassed about? There's nothing wrong with that. Come on, I'll take you to the restroom without a problem."

After Rachel walked two steps with Riley in her arms, she suddenly remembered that if Roger came back later and didn't see them, he might be worried about them. Therefore, she went back to the original seat and left a note on it. She also made sure the note would not be blown away by wind by pressing something on it. Then she followed the signs and walking to the restroom.

As soon as Rachel and Riley had disappeared into the crowd, a man wearing a cap detached himself from all the other shoppers and came over to the bench where Rachel had left the note.

He walked past the bench, then merged in with the crowds again. But the note was gone with him.

Rachel and Riley were just exiting the restroom now.

Rachel had just helped Riley to wash her hands and was about to head back to the bench, when a woman bumped right into them. The milk tea the woman had been carrying was knocked out of her hand and spilt all the way down the front of Rachel's sweater.

Rachel hadn't seen the woman in time to dodge, so the best she could do now was take a few steps back.

She didn't even get the chance to say anything before the woman started talking. "I'm so sorry! I wasn't watching where I was going! This is such a mess! Here, let me help you clean the stain."

As she prattled on her hurried apologies, the woman reached into her bag and pulled out a packet of tissues. She took one out and reached forward to clean the stains off Rachel's sweater. But Rachel didn't let her. She stepped back with a frown. "No, thank you. It's alright. I'll do it myself," she said in a voice that was a little colder than it should have been.

The woman looked guiltily up at her and pursed her lips. "I'm really, really sorry... I-"

"It's alright. It's really nothing," Rachel cut her off. She just had the slightest feeling that the entire incident hadn't been an accident. Rachel quickly studied the woman's face, but didn't find anything in her expression to suggest she had malicious intent. Perhaps she was overthinking this...

The woman apologized again before she turned and left the restroom, muttering to herself the entire time. Riley was now looking up at Rachel in concern.

Rachel glanced down at her sweater. Not a lot of the tea had spilt onto it, but it was still enough to ruin the fabric if she didn't do something about it soon. She had to take it off anyway. She couldn't go out in public like this.

"Riley, can you wait here for me?" she asked sweetly.

Riley gave an obedient nod.

Rachel tenderly rested her hand on the little girl's head and said, "Don't move. Stay right here and wait for me. I'm just quickly going to take this sweater off."

Luckily, Rachel was wearing a nice thick coat, so she wouldn't get cold without her sweater on.

Rachel left Riley waiting for her in the main area of the restroom. As she went towards a stall, she glanced over her shoulder multiple times to make sure Riley was alright. Once she was convinced Riley was okay, she closed the stall door and pulled her sweater off.

The entire changing process took less than 2 minutes. She walked out the stall and

immediately called, "Riley?" 1

She looked towards where the little girl had been standing; she wasn't there. She glanced frantically around the restroom, looking for any sign of the child. She checked every corner, and aside from the cleaning tools piled up on the far side of the room, there was nothing. Riley was gone.

Rachel felt her heart start pounding in her chest. The first thing her mind went back to was the woman from earlier...

Was she a human trafficker?

Sudden panic pulsed through Rachel's body at the thought. She sprinted out the restroom and looked around the immediate area, desperately searching for Riley.

Rachel pursed her lips in thought. She could feel her mind spinning out of control, and her blood rushing through her veins. If that woman was a trafficker, Rachel doubted she'd be able to get far with Riley in such a crowded space. She had to be around here somewhere.

Rachel took a deep breath, closed her eyes for a moment and calmed herself. Then she opened her eyes and stepped forward.

Suddenly, she stopped and stared around her. She didn't even know where to start looking. Which direction would a trafficker have taken to steal a child?

What if she went the wrong way and never found Riley? If she chose the wrong way, she was giving the traffickers plenty of time to get away. Rachel steadied her breathing again before she started to panic. She just had to think. She turned back to the restroom. This was the starting location, the best place to start. It was at that moment that she saw the security camera above the door. She narrowed her eyes and her expression darkened.

She pulled her phone out of her pocket and started tapping away at the screen.

Within a matter of seconds, she managed to pull up the video footage from two minutes ago. She stared intently down at her phone, watching for any suspicious activity. But to her surprise, she saw Riley step out the restroom alone.

Rachel's eyes widened in shock. So Riley had left on her own? The woman hadn't taken her?

"Rachel, you are here. I finally find you." Roger's voice carried over the noise of the crowds. And with every word he said, Rachel could tell he was getting closer...



# Chapter 110 Pushed Into Traffic

Rachel's fingers tightened on the phone. "Roger," she said as she looked up at him hesitantly. "I remember you always used to eat whiskey heart chocolate bars before exams. I remember before we took the college entrance exam I asked you why. You told me that chocolate helps with your anxiety, and that sweet things make you feel happy. I saw someone selling the chocolate bars just now so..." Roger said coyly as he held his hand out to her. Resting in his palm was a chocolate bar. He had his eyes lowered shyly and didn't see the panicked expression on her face.

"Roger," Rachel said before he said anything more. Roger looked up at her in confusion. Rachel cleared her throat before she said, "Riley... Riley is missing."

Bam!

It shattered from the impact, spilling its whiskey contents at their feet. It smelt more alcoholic than sweet. Rachel hadn't even had the chance to try and take it before Roger dropped it.

"This is my fault. I was supposed to be watching her," Rachel said after she'd taken a deep breath to calm herself.

"How long has she been missing?" Roger asked in a low, overly calm voice.

"Three or four minutes at the most."

"I don't think she could have gotten far in that time. Let's split up and look for her. We'll cover more ground that way. Don't worry, we'll find her." Roger tried to comfort Rachel as much as possible. He didn't want her to blame herself too much.

Rachel nodded slowly as she looked up at him. "I've checked the surveillance footage on that camera," she said as she pointed up at the camera near the entrance to the bathroom. "It looks like she went that way, but I can't tell where she went from there. There aren't any more cameras along that way." She gestured in the direction she'd seen Riley go.

Roger only briefly paused to wonder how Rachel would have been able to get hold of the surveillance footage in such a short span of time. But right now he didn't have time to think on it too deeply. Riley was missing, and they had to find her. With a nod he said, "You go left, I'll go right. Let's keep each other updated. Call me if anything happens." ①

Rachel nodded in agreement, then the two of them set off on their different paths.

She turned left at a fork in the road and carried on walking along it for some time. It led out to the road outside the square, but she didn't find Riley.

A light sheen of nervous sweat had broken out all over her body and was shining on her forehead. She stopped on the curb and looked up at the red light. She pursed her lips and felt the faint beginnings of unease rising in her chest.

Was it possible that Riley had crossed the road?

The longer she thought about the possibility, the more nervous she became. The red light flashed mockingly at her as the count down on the monitor began. She wiped the clammy sweat off her hands and pulled her phone out her pocket. The screen displayed no new calls or messages. Roger hadn't called. She put her phone away, murmuring to herself, "Stop scaring yourself now. Riley is fine. Everything will be alright."

As she glanced across the road, she saw a little girl dressed in the same clothes as Riley had been wearing. She was standing with her back to Rachel, so it was impossible to see her face and know for sure whether it was her or not. But the similar clothes were enough for Rachel. "Riley!" Rachel shouted.

But her attempt was futile. The noise of the traffic drowned out her voice and the little girl didn't hear her. Worst of all, Rachel began to lose sight of her as she walked away.

Rachel was just about to step into the road to chase her when her phone rang. The sound broke the anxious haze that had been clouding her mind.

She pulled out her phone and glanced at the caller ID; it was Roger. She immediately answered it.

"Roger, I think I've found-"

"Rachel, I found Riley. Where are you? I'll meet you at your location," Roger interrupted her. In the background she could hear people laughing and talking, as well as the distinct sound of Riley's voice calling her "auntie".

Rachel raised her head and looked back towards the little girl on the other side of the road.

A man came over and scooped her into his arms. Now she could finally see the girl's face.

She was not Riley.

Rachel audibly sighed in relief. "That's great news. I'm standing on the side of the road west of the square," she said.

As she spoke, the traffic lights turned green and the cars came speeding past her. The sound of rubber on the road, and brakes and hooters drowned out the sound of her voice. Roger hardly heard a word she said.

Roger tried his best to understand, but with the noise of the traffic he just didn't catch enough of her sentence to comprehend her meaning. He was already walking down the left path Rachel had taken, and he had Riley held safely in his arms.

"What did you say?" Roger said loudly. "I couldn't hear anything!"

Rachel stuck her finger in her opposite ear so she could hear him better. She raised her voice as she spoke this time, "I'm standing-"

Before she finished her sentence, someone pushed her from behind. She staggered forward, trying to regain her balance. But she couldn't. She'd been standing so close to the edge of the road that one step was enough to put her in harm's way; right in front of the speeding traffic.

Car and truck horns blared wildly at her.

A particularly loud truck horn blasted from just off to her right. It was close; very, very close.

It was going too fast to stop in such a short span of time. The driver was doing his best, but he knew well enough that he wouldn't be able to avoid hitting her. He hammered frantically on his hooter, trying to get her to move.

Rachel knew she should have dived out the way when she saw the truck, but her mind just went totally blank.

At that exact moment, Roger arrived. He heard the truck's hooter over the phone, and in person. He raised his head in time to see Rachel staggering into the road, her phone clutched in her hand, and the truck speeding towards her. Roger's eyes widened in immediate panic.

"Rachel!" he screamed, even though he knew she couldn't hear him.

Rachel stared stupidly at the truck. She knew she should get out the way. But she couldn't. It was like her feet were set in a block of cement and her brain had turned to jelly. The only thing she did was cover her stomach with her hands.

'Is this really how I die? In a car accident? Am I never going to meet this baby that has been making my life a living hell?'

This was the only thing that flashed through her mind before she closed her eyes.

The truck hooted again. This time it was louder, closer, and all the more frantic.

All the other pedestrians gasped in horror and covered their mouths with their hands. Some closed their eyes like Rachel had, unwilling to watch the bloody scene about to unfold.

Rachel felt something hit her body. And then suddenly, she was being tumbled along the ground.

It hurt.

Every inch of her body screamed with pain. It felt like all her joints had popped out their sockets, and like every bone had been crushed. Then, a fierce burning sensation chased through her veins.

Was this what it felt like to get hit by a car?

Was she dying?

Rachel tried to open her eyes, but only managed to pry them open half-way. She tried to reach up and touch her head, but her arm wouldn't respond to her wishes. It felt like she was losing control of her entire body. With her eyes partly opened, she could see the road where she'd been standing. She could see black skid marks on the tar from where the truck had braked. There was the definite smell of burning rubber in their air.

But that offensive smell was quickly covered by something all the more pleasant.

'This smells nice,' Rachel thought to herself. It was a minty fragrance. Not too strong, and not too weak. It was pleasing to the senses; and it was something she'd smelt before.

A sharp pain blossomed over her forehead and jarred her right to the back of her skull.

It was quite painful to be hit by a car. Then she decided she'd somehow also been poisoned. That was the only logical explanation as to why she'd first felt like she'd been crushed, and now felt as if all her organs were being twisted into knots.

Rachel's thoughts rapidly spun out of control, spiraling beyond her comprehension. And then there was nothing. She'd passed out.

The last thing she remembered was that minty smell.

She had no idea that Victor had rushed her to the Flowerence Hospital, nor that he was waiting outside the emergency room for the doctor.

He didn't have to wait too much longer for the doctor to appear. "Mr. Sullivan," the doctor said, "there is nothing to worry about. Miss Bennet just has a concussion. The baby is perfectly fine. She should wake up in a few hours or so. I do recommend a few days of bed rest though."

Victor said nothing. He just stayed quiet and maintained that neutral expression he wore so well.

After her examination, Rachel was sent up to the VIP ward.

Ivan stayed at the reception desk for a little while longer to pay the bills and get Rachel's medication. Then he went up to her ward. At first he only saw her lying on the bed. Her face was pale, and her head was wrapped in a white gauze that made her look practically ghostly. Then he saw movement at the doors of the balcony. He looked up as Victor stepped back into the room.

"All the paperwork for Miss Bennet's hospitalization has been filled in," Ivan said.

"Alright," said Victor indifferently.

Ivan looked down at the wound on Victor's hand. It was still bleeding and covered in dirt. But it was enough to assure Ivan that what he'd seen a mere hour ago had been real.

# Chapter 111 Stay Awake, Rachel

It was hard to believe that such a traumatizing event had happened only an hour ago. And it had all started with a Maybach driving from the airport to the Sullivan Group. Victor was returning home from the Lerestin after dealing with a defect in one of the Sullivan Group's investment projects.

Ivan was sitting in the passenger seat beside the driver. Every now and then he'd glance at the rearview mirror to look at Victor.

The interior of the car was dark, owing to the special film covering the windows. Victor had his head tilted back against the headrest of the seat. His eyes were closed, and he had one hand resting against his temple. His long, dark eyelashes nearly brushed the ridges of his cheeks, and very nearly blended into the dark rings under his eyes. He was exhausted. These past few days had been tough and he'd barely gotten any sleep. But even in his fatigued state, he still looked classy and well put together.

Ivan turned his gaze out the window.

They weren't that far from the Sullivan Group now. If Ivan was estimating correctly, they were about halfway. The driver slowed and stopped at a red traffic light.

From here, Ivan could see crowds milling about in front of them. "What are they doing?" he asked curiously.

The driver followed the line of Ivan's stare. He gave a nod and said, "It's the opening ceremony for the food festival. Usually, it's held in the Western District, but this year it's being held in the Eastern District."

Ivan knew the food festival was an annual event held in Apliaria. It had been happening for as long as he could remember.

But such things didn't interest him. He wasn't a foodie, and usually just stayed away from the busy crowds. As he was about to look away, he suddenly saw someone he recognized out the corner of his eye.

Ivan's eyebrows furrowed in confusion. He blinked, then looked back at the woman.

Sure enough, it was Rachel; just as he'd thought. From what he could tell, she was standing on the side of the road talking to someone on the phone.

Ivan looked back at Victor and chewed nervously on his lip. He didn't know if he should wake him and tell him that Rachel was standing right across the street from them.

Before he could even make a decision, Victor slowly opened his eyes. "What?" he asked in a grumbling, sleep-fogged voice. It appeared as if the weight of Ivan's stare had woken him.

"Mr. Sullivan," Ivan said and then hesitated. He stared at Victor for a moment then continued, "I... I saw Miss Bennet."

Victor stared at him almost blankly before he said, "Okay." As he spoke, a cold look came

over his face that suggested he had no interest in what Rachel was doing.

Ivan turned around awkwardly and stared out the window again. It had been the wrong decision to say anything.

Victor settled back into his seat and turned his head so he could look out the window. He could see Rachel standing there, like just another person on the street. Only she stood out from the rest of the crowd. Well, to him anyway.

He had to wonder who she was on the phone to. She was smiling so gently and happily. It made her face seem soft, innocent... Different from when she'd been with him. She'd always looked angry and aggressive.

The red light flickered off and the green light came on.

The driver put the car into gear and started off along the road again. Victor kept his cold eyes glued to the window, but his expression was relaxed and indifferent. He closed his eyes and was about to look away.

Suddenly, a car horn blared shrilly over the sounds of traffic.

Victor turned his attention back out the window, just in time to see Rachel had been swept up by the crowds and was being pushed into on-coming traffic. The warning hoot had come from the truck that was barreling straight towards her.

Victor's eyes widened.

Ivan raised his head and turned his attention to the scene unfolding before him. His face went pale with horror. He whipped around in his seat to look at Victor. "Mr. Sullivan..."

But Victor wasn't there. The backseat was empty. Ivan hadn't even noticed that he'd got out the car.

The sound of squealing brakes brought him back to his senses. He blinked rapidly and looked out the window in time to see Victor scoop Rachel into his arms and roll her along the ground to safety. The truck managed to stop; right where Rachel had been standing.

If Victor had been one second too slow, the truck would have hit her.

Ivan threw the car door open and hurried to them. Victor was holding Rachel cradled in his arms, gently brushing her hair out her face, and off the bleeding patch on her forehead. As they'd rolled, she'd hit her head hard enough on a loose stone that she was now unconscious.

"Do you know who was driving that truck?" Victor suddenly asked, pulling himself out the memories of the accident.

"Yes. The truck driver's name is Tripp Miller. He's a delivery man for the frozen seafood industry. I believe he was delivering equipment. I've cross-examined his bank account and his background. There is nothing there that suggests he has anything to do with Miss Bennet," Ivan said, carefully recounting all the information he'd found out. He ran his tongue over his bottom lip before he carefully asked his next question, "Mr. Sullivan, you don't think this was an accident, do you?"

Victor stayed silent. He narrowed his eyes as his expression darkened. He didn't look up from Rachel's passive face. He kept his gaze carefully trained on her ashen features, reliving the feeling of her slowly losing consciousness in his arms.

He remembered what the wound on her forehead had looked like before it was patched up; deep, gaping and seeping blood down her face and into her hair. She'd been pale from both pain and shock.

As they'd rolled away from the truck, Victor had heard her mutter, "It hurts..."

Her blood was striking against his white shirt. Almost accusing in a way.

When he realized she was going to faint, he had gripped her face in his hands to force her to look at him. Panic had nearly choked him as he watched the light slowly leaving her eyes.

He was so terrified that she would never wake up again if she dropped into unconsciousness.

"Rachel, stay awake. I swear, if you don't, I'll send your damn maid to Crown Club immediately. Do you hear me?" He gripped at her hand, trying to impress his will onto her. He held her tightly, hoping the pressure would help to keep her awake. The force of his grip was so great that her delicate white skin immediately began to go red and bruise.

Rachel tried her hardest to stay awake. Her eyes kept fluttering and she looked like she wanted to speak...

But in the end she lost to the darkness of unconsciousness.

Now, sitting in this hospital ward looking down at her prone form, Victor felt uncontrollable feelings for her. What scared him most was the fact that they were growing.

"Ivan, send someone to keep an eye on that driver," Victor said sternly, a slight frown playing at the corners of his mouth.

"Yes, sir," Ivan replied. As he dipped his head obediently, he glanced down at the wound on Victor's hand. "Mr. Sullivan," he said worriedly, "you're hurt. Let me get the nurse for you."

Victor looked at the broken skin on the back of his hand and said nothing. But he didn't refuse either.

He just fixed his cold eyes back on Rachel's impassive face.

Back at the Sullivan family's house, in the living room up on the second floor, Maria was busy treating herself.

She was sitting comfortably on one of the sofas while a beautician gave her a delicate manicure.

There was a knock at the door. It was the butler. He stepped into the room, followed by another man. The other man was dressed all in black, with a cap on his head that was low enough to cover his eyes.

Maria looked up when the man entered. She pulled her hand away from the beautician and sat up straight. "You may leave now," she said to the beautician.

The beautician took one look between Maria and the man and immediately understood. She hurriedly packed all her tools back into her manicure kit, stood, and walked towards the

door. But as she passed by the man, she accidentally caught a peak of the man's eyes under the brim of his cap.

A pang of shock chased through her body, and she stopped. But only for a moment before she shook her head and nearly ran out the room.

"I thought I told you to keep an eye on her. What are you doing here?" Maria asked as she looked lazily up at the man.

The man removed his cap and held it loosely in his hands. The light of the room fell on his face, highlighting his striking features.

He had a deep scar that started between his eyebrows and slanted down over his right eye, intersecting it almost perfectly through the middle.

But the most eye-catching feature of all was the eye itself; it was totally white.



# Chapter 112 Awake From A Nightmare

Even the butler, Lukas was shocked by the sight of the man's eye. He'd seen it on multiple occasions, but the feeling never faded.

Lukas didn't know the actual story about how the man had got the scar. Maria had told him that the man's enemies had chased him down and cut him, just before she'd saved his life. Lukas didn't know how true this story actually was.

The man was keenly aware that Lukas was staring at him, but he didn't care. He completely ignored him and kept looking at Maria. "Rachel is in hospital at the moment. She's in a coma," he said calmly.

Maria had been busy checking her nail polish, apparently already bored by the conversation. But she stopped when she heard what the man said.

"She's in hospital? What about her baby? Is her baby alright?" Lukas asked before he could stop himself.

"The baby is fine. Rachel just has a concussion," the man said.

Lukas's previously worried expression changed to something a little more unreadable. "Never in my life did I ever think Rachel would really be pregnant..."

Maria splayed her hand on her thigh and looked down at her half-finished manicure. Her hair fell forward to cover her face, and her thick eyelashes hid the look in her eyes. It was nearly impossible to tell what she was thinking.

After a long while, she said, "I see. You should leave Apliaria these days. I will give you some money."

"Okay," the man said in a low voice. He pulled his cap back on, adjusting it so it hid his eyes, then he left without another word.

Lukas quickly centered himself and calmed his rapid heartbeat. Once he was sure his emotions were no longer showing on his face, he looked up at Maria and said, "Madame, would you like me to find someone else to keep an eye on her?"

Maria said nothing in return.

Instead, she sat up and reached for her wine glass on the tea table. She held it up to her eyes and gently swirled the red liquid in the glass, barely even moving her wrist. Then she touched her lips elegantly to the brim and took a sip.

As she tilted her head back to drink, she exposed her smooth, pale neck. It was made even more enticing by the lighting in the room.

Lukas couldn't help but look at it. And he couldn't help that he was nearly salivating at the sight.

For a lady of nearly 50 years old, Maria was still an extremely attractive, charming woman. Every move she made looked measured, elegant, well thought through and refined. She

somehow managed to effortlessly look simultaneously lazy and sexy. It was no surprise then that she'd married into the Sullivan family. Even among the younger, fairer ladies she'd stood out as someone interesting and exotic.

But just like beautiful flowers, the more beauty it held, the more poisonous it was.

Such a statement applied almost perfectly to this woman.

Before Maria had married into the Sullivan family, the Kennedy family hadn't even been considered as one of the upper-class families. It had been quite a shock when Maria, a woman coming from just about nothing, had married into one of the wealthiest families.

Maria had been Mrs. Sullivan for more than 20 years now. Many said it was out of sheer dumb-luck, but the vast majority were of the opinion that she had schemed and lied her way into the position. Lukas had been in Maria's service for nearly 10 years. He knew better than most just how vicious and vindictive this beautiful woman was.

Lukas kept taking deep, measured breaths to keep himself calm as she waited for Maria to speak.

"Send someone else to keep an eye on her?" Maria sneered. "And give that bastard more evidence?"

Lukas could feel the confusion starting to show on his face. Before he could say anything Maria spoke again, "Why do you think I asked him to leave Apliaria in the first place? As ridiculous as that bastard is, do you really take him for a fool? Do you really think he'd be satisfied that this was an accident?"

She shook her head and stood. She didn't need Lukas to answer. In fact, she didn't want, or expect him to. "I'm feeling a little tired. Tell the beautician to come up to my room," she said airily.

"Yes, Madame,"

Lukas said softly.

Back at the hospital ward, Rachel seem to be in some kind of distress.

Her eyes were still tightly shut, but her mouth was tipped down in a frown and her forehead was glistening with sweat. She looked like she was having a bad dream.

In her dream, Rachel was running down a dark, empty road. There was no one behind her, just the streetlights that seemed to be keeping pace with her. Every time she glanced back, all she could see was darkness; the lights turned off as she passed them. She didn't know why she was running. But she was overwhelmed by the feeling that if she stopped, the blackness would swallow her whole, and then she'd disappear forever.

So she kept on running. And running... And running. She started getting tired. Every step was becoming more and more labored. Then she started slowing down.

She bit her lip, willing herself to carry on. Her vision was blurred with sweat, and her breathing was coming in great gasps; but still she ran. Suddenly, someone grabbed her arm.

Rachel whipped around to stare right into the face of the man. "You!"

"Rachel. Stop running!" the man said coldly, gripping her chin tightly.

Rachel gasped in horror. She tried to struggle out his grasp, but it was useless.

"If you try and escape, I'll give your precious little maid to Crown Club and let those men do whatever they want with her," Victor seethed.

A streetlamp not too far away flickered on. It illuminated Abby lying pathetically on the ground. Covered in blood, she was dirty and looked all around miserable. She looked up from the ground with tears glistening in her eyes as she said, "Miss Bennet..."

"Abby!"

Rachel screamed. She tried to pull out of Victor's grip, but he was holding her too tightly. Violent rage boiled through her body at his insolence. She rounded on him and shouted, "Victor, let me go! You bastard! Bastard!"

But Victor's face remained cold and expressionless, even in the light of her anger.

Rachel was overcome by the sudden urge to bite him to force him to let her go. Before she had fully committed to the idea, Victor suddenly pushed her into the middle of the road.

A truck's horn blared to her right. Rachel whipped her head in the direction of the sound to see there was a truck barreling straight towards her. She looked at Victor in horror. He was still staring at her with that blank, uncaring expression. His eyes were almost dead as he said, "Go to hell, Rachel."

Rachel screamed. She screamed so loudly that she woke herself up from the nightmare.

She gasped for breath, straining against the clutches of her own subconscious.

Victor's last words still rung in her ears. So clearly, in fact, that she was having trouble discerning reality from imagination. She spent a few more moments steadying her breathing and calming herself. Once she was quite certain she was no longer trapped in the dream, she looked around the room.

It was dark.

It didn't take Rachel long to figure out where she was. The faint smell of disinfectant and the parts of the room she could see by the light of moon painted her a clear enough picture.

She was in the hospital.

Slowly, Rachel sat up. As her thoughts returned to normal, she started to remember what had happened.

She'd taken a call from Roger. He'd phoned to tell her he had found Riley, and that he was now on his way to meet her. She'd tried to move away from the crowds so she could hear him better, and give him proper instructions as to where she was. Then someone had pushed her into the road...

And she was still alive?

Rachel gasped and immediately laid her hand on her stomach. She could feel the small lump beneath her palm; her baby was alright.

But was she?

She remembered how much pain she'd been in before she'd passed out. How was it that she was still alive?

Rachel frowned in thought, trying to order her thoughts. She didn't get very far before someone turned the lights in the ward on.

The sudden, bright assault of the iridescent lights was too much for her sensitive eyes. She raised her hand to shield her face and to give her eyes time to adjust.

Out the corner of her eye, she saw someone sitting on the sofa.

Rachel turned her head to look at him. Her expression slackened as their gazes locked; catching her totally off guard.

"What are you doing here?" she blurted out before she could stop herself. The memories of her dream were still so fresh in her head she was having trouble believing her own eyes.

Before she said anything more, she stopped. Her hazy memory of the accident finally cleared.

Someone had grabbed her and rolled her out the way. She hadn't had time to see who it was.

Everything had happened so quickly she'd barely had time to comprehend the situation.

Then she'd hit her head and passed out.

All she could remember was a faint ringing sound and the minty scent before she'd fallen unconscious.

# Chapter 113 Hated Her The Most

"Looks like you've remembered everything," Victor said with a mocking tone as he walked to her bedside. Though he sounded condescending, his face remained expressionless.

Rachel said nothing. She just lowered her eyes and stayed silent.

It was indeed true what Victor said; she did remember everything now.

This included how he'd saved her... And what he'd frantically said to her when he'd tried to keep her awake.

"Thank you," she said softly, and then finally, looked up at him.

"You don't have to thank me," Victor said. His expression remained neutral and relaxed, concealing anything he might have been feeling. "You should be grateful."

This was enough to tell Rachel that whatever he said next was going to be unpleasant.

And she was right.

Victor reached out and grabbed her chin, raising her head to force her to look at him. "You should be grateful you're pregnant with my child, otherwise I would have just let you die."

Rachel's expression pinched. She easily managed to move her face out of his hand; he hadn't been holding her tightly. With a sour smile she said, "Oh I see... You're not the one I should be thanking then."

Victor narrowed his eyes, gazing coldly at her.

"You're right though; I should be thanking the baby," Rachel said as she looked into his eyes.

"After all, you just desperately want me dead in any case."

Rachel didn't notice the shocked expression on Victor's face when he looked down at her.

He wanted her dead?

At least now he knew what she thought of him.

But he couldn't deny that in some ways, she was right. There had been a time when he'd wanted her dead, and would have done anything to achieve his goal.

Now, her words wounded him in a way he couldn't describe. It felt like a cold, sharp knife had been driven into his heart and was now being twisted and turned, like a type of torture.

"I... I'm glad you know your place," Victor said coldly, trying his best to keep the burning pain out his voice and expression.

Rachel forced herself to keep smiling, but otherwise stayed silent. She wasn't in the mood to argue now. Her head still felt like it was stuffed with cotton wool from the concussion.

"Rachel."

She raised her eyebrows in response. She tilted her head to the side as she waited for whatever it was he wanted to say.

Victor inhaled to speak. He was already armed with a sarcastic remark, but when he looked

down into her pale face, he found he was suddenly struck speechless.

The cool, autumn night breeze drifted in through the half-opened window and gently lifted the curtain in a gauzy wave.

Rachel waited patiently for him to say something. She kept her eyes locked on him, granting him her full, undivided attention. After a few more minutes ticked by in which he still said nothing, she finally asked in a hoarse voice, "Mr. Sullivan, what else did you want to say?"

Her tone was cold, distant, and laced with just a hint of aggression.

Victor's expression suddenly darkened and that cold glimmer in his eyes hardened. "Next time you try and kill yourself, please do so where no one else can see you. Especially me. If you try something like that again, I won't care if that baby dies with you." 2

Then he turned on his heel and marched out the room.

Rachel stared at the door for a long while after he'd left. She was completely dumbstruck by what he'd said. She kept turning his words over and over in her mind, until she finally realized what he'd meant; he thought she'd done it on purpose. He thought she'd purposefully stepped into the road so that he'd have to come and save her.

The thought made her both humiliated and irritated.

Did he think she was insane!

How was she supposed to know he was going to be there at exactly that time? If she'd known he was going to be there, she'd have avoided him at all costs; no matter what Lukas said.

Rachel gritted her teeth tightly. She should have called him back and explained things to him, tried to reason with him, but it was too late now. He was already long gone.

Now, confined to the hospital bed, with no way to release her anger, she felt even worse.

And Victor didn't come back.

The doctor asked her to stay in hospital for a week. Although it was nothing more than a slight concussion, he'd explained that it was for observation purposes because she was pregnant.

The next day, two stone-faced bodyguards appeared to stand vigil at the door of her ward.

She knew Victor had sent them. Who else could it be? But she didn't try and contest. She couldn't leave the hospital without the man's permission anyway, so arguing was useless anyway.

Later in the afternoon, she had a quick physical exam. It was just to make sure she and the baby were both healthy. After that, she took the tablet Lukas had bought her and went to sit outside on the balcony. She called Quintin and chatted casually with him while she searched the dark web for any information regarding Abby.

The door to the balcony was opened softly.

Rachel's eyes widened, but then she forced herself to relax. She quickly exited the dark web and instead, opened a simple game on the tablet that she began playing.

Out the corner of her eye, she glanced at whoever had just arrived. She didn't see much, just the bright white of a coat. Probably a doctor. Without turning around or raising her eyes she said, "No dizziness, no nausea. I'm perfectly fine, doctor. You've been checking up on me all day; aren't you getting tired? Why don't you sit down and have a break?"

She'd barely finished speaking when she heard a woman laugh.

Rachel frowned down at her tablet, then looked up at the person she'd thought was her attending doctor. She had been wrong.

"Dr. Jimenez?" Rachel was in surprise when she saw her.

Carla smiled in greeting and said pleasantly, "I know it's just a concussion, but it's good that he checks on you so often. The baby seemed a little unstable at one point, so it's not a bad thing that you're being monitored so carefully. Rather safe than sorry, you know."

Rachel pulled out a chair and nodded towards it, inviting Clara to join her. "He comes in and checks on me every hour or so. It's not like I'm going to give birth any time soon."

Clara glanced down at Rachel's flat stomach before she could stop herself. "You have a point here."

"I know." Rachel shifted in her chair and closed her tablet. She pushed herself up straighter and then asked, "How's Riley?" Now that she'd remembered what had happened, she remembered all the events from the previous day.

Clara's eyebrows rose in surprise. "She's fine I... I actually came here to apologize," she said.

"Apologize? Why?"

"You were there for Riley and..." Clara said before she shook her head and gave up. She had a complicated expression on her face and her eyes were downcast. "Luckily, you're alright. If something had happened to you, I never would have been able to forgive myself."

She lowered her gaze again as if she were ashamed.

"None of this is your fault," Rachel said calmly. "It was no one's fault, not even Riley's. If we really want to point fingers, it would be my fault. I lost Riley when I went to the bathroom."

Clara looked up at her, that complicated expression was back on her face.

Rachel frowned in confusion at her strange look. "What?"

"Nothing." Clara shook her head and then said gently, "I'm just glad you're alright."

If something had happened to Rachel, Clara knew in her heart that she would blame herself for the rest of her life; and she knew Roger would do the same.

Clara couldn't help but think back to the events of the previous day.

She'd stopped Roger from running out into the road when he'd seen Rachel in distress. He'd been about to step into the traffic with no regard for his own safety.

"Clara! Get out of the way!" he shouted at her.

That road was busy. Cars were speeding up and down, and Clara had no doubt that if he'd rushed over to save Rachel, he'd have been hit.

Clara couldn't bear the thought of watching her brother get hurt, just to save Rachel. "Roger! Stop! You're not thinking straight-"

The sound of squealing brakes choked off her next words.

Both of them were left standing, staring in shock.

Clara slowly turned her head, afraid of what she might see. She didn't think she could handle the sight of Rachel's body lying broken on the ground. But that wasn't the case. What she saw instead was that someone had saved Rachel. Before she could stop him, Roger ran towards them.

When Rachel's savior raised his head, Clara instantly recognized him; Victor.

She ran to catch up with Roger. She grabbed his arm and pulled him to a stop. "Roger, don't. Stay away..."

She tightened her grip on him when he tried to pull away from her. She gave him a small, firm shake before she said, "Victor will take care of her. She's pregnant with his child; he's not going to let anything happen to her. Don't worry."

But truth be told, Clara didn't even believe what she was saying.

There was a chance Rachel wasn't okay. Sure, the truck hadn't hit her, but she had taken quite a tumble with Victor. Even from here, Clara could tell that she was unconscious. It might be no big deal for an ordinary person; but Rachel was actually a pregnant woman.

Roger stopped fighting once he heard what Clara said. He watched in stoic silence as Victor carried Rachel into his Maybach and drove away.



# Chapter 114 Want To Leave

Rachel stared at Clara after what she'd said.

After a while, she lowered her eyes and said softly, "Dr. Jimenez, I'm fine. I really am. Please, don't worry."

Clara was silent at first as she relived the memory. Then slowly, her mind resurfaced to the present. She looked up at Rachel and noticed how she kept habitually resting her hand on her stomach as she spoke and gestured around. "You're about three months along now, right?" she asked, changing the subject. "Have you made an appointment for the prenatal check-up yet?"

Prenatal checkup?

At first Rachel was confused, but then she remembered what the doctor had said when he'd told her she was pregnant. She was supposed to come in for a thorough check-up at the 12 weeks mark so they could get a sense of how the baby was developing, and if it was in good health.

But with everything going on recently, Rachel had totally forgotten.

Clara noticed her lost, vacant expression. "I mean, you're in a hospital," she said gently. "No better time to get a check-up than now. I can make the appointment for you, if you like?"

"I would like that. Thank you, Dr. Jimenez."

"Oh, it's really nothing," Clara said with a shake of her head. "I'm just relieved that you don't blame me..."

'What?'

Rachel thought, caught totally off-guard by what she said. "Blame you?" she said with a frown. "Why would I blame you?" ①

"I lied to you about Roger... And when it came to your pregnancy... Miss Bennet, I'm so sorry. Please, forgive me." Clara had been torn between this for a long time already. She knew it was wrong of her to lie about her identity, but she hadn't wanted Rachel to have anything to do with her brother. She'd just been trying to protect him.

But since then, she'd come to view herself as a selfish woman.

As the only son of the Jimenez family, Roger was the sole heir to everything. Unlike most families, he probably wasn't going to be forced into an arranged marriage. He was fortunate enough to be able to choose who to love and who to marry. But Clara hadn't wanted that woman to be Rachel.

Especially not with all the absurd things Rachel had done in the last two years. But not only that; Rachel was Victor's ex-wife. And now, even after they'd got divorced, they were still somehow always entangled with each other. ①

Clara knew how stubborn Roger was. And she knew that once he fell in love with someone,

his heart would be set on that person.

She had been afraid that Rachel would use her to get close to Roger if she knew she was his sister. She knew Roger would do anything for Rachel. He'd follow her every whim and fancy, and obey every command she gave him.

She was terrified that Rachel would ruin Roger, and thus, the family.

She had felt the only choice she had left was to lie. But the one thing she hadn't counted on was how important Rachel was to Roger, and how much he loved her. No one could have expected him to secretly resign from his position abroad and come back home once he heard that Rachel and Victor were divorced.

"So that's what you came to tell me then," Rachel said with a chuckle. Her voice and laughter brought Clara out of her thoughts.

"Well... Not exactly," Clara said gently, fluttering her eyelashes like delicate butterfly wings. Rachel leaned forward as if to listen carefully. She rested her elbow on the armrest, cradled her chin in her hand and gently tapped her fingers against her face.

Her intense gaze made Clara feel instantly uneasy. She had to resist the urge to reach up and wipe her face, as if Rachel's close inspection had revealed a speck of dirt.

"Miss Bennet..."

Rachel's lips curved into a slight smile, and, mercifully, she looked away. "I don't blame you, Dr. Jimenez. Rest assured, you have nothing to be worried about."

Clara had the vaguest feeling that Rachel had known who she was from the start. And she was right.

But Rachel didn't care why Clara had lied about who she was.

"Actually, I was a little surprised. I never thought a daughter from the Jimenez family would choose to be a doctor in the first place." Rachel had tipped her head back now and was looking up at the sky. Her eyes followed a plane that flew overhead, miles and miles above them.

Clara just stared at her as if she were caught in a trance.

She had never known Rachel very well. But after only meeting her a few times, she could at least be of the opinion that she was very different to the rumors that had been spread about her.

If Clara was being honest with herself, Rachel was nothing like those rumors.

"Well... What profession did you think I'd follow?" Clara looked up as well, following Rachel's line of sight to where the plane had been. It was gone, leaving behind only a trail of white cloud.

Rachel looked down again, blinking her eyes to adjust them. Then she reached forward, picked up a tangerine from the table and peeled it thoughtfully. "I don't know. I just thought being a lady from an affluent family, you would have gone for an easier career." She tore off a piece and popped it in her mouth. She chewed it then said, "I guess I just never pictured

you as a doctor."

Clara said nothing. All she did was smile.

This wasn't the first time someone had said this to her since she'd become a doctor.

Rachel handed her a tangerine then stretched her arms up. Once she felt the muscles in her back pull pleasantly, she crossed her hands behind her head and relaxed. "It must be nice to be a doctor. I suppose you get to save peoples' lives every day. I've always said that it doesn't matter what a person does, as long as they love it and are passionate about it." ①

"What do you want to do then?" Clara asked and looked at her.

Rachel glanced casually over at Clara. With a perfectly neutral expression she said, "I want to leave."

Clara was stunned. "I thought..."

"Yes?" Rachel replied, "You thought what?"

"I thought you'd say you want to have this baby so you and Victor can be together again." It was well known among the members of the upper-class people that Rachel loved Victor very much. When Clara had heard Rachel was pregnant with Victor's baby, she'd thought Rachel would use this as a gateway into getting back with him.

Rachel nearly choked as she said, "Get back with him?"

"If you don't want to be with him again, then why did you keep the baby?" Clara asked.

"I want a baby of my own. It's as simple as that. I'm not going to use this child to get back together with him," Rachel said.

Clara studied Rachel's face, trying to tell if she was lying or not. But she could find no hint of anything else aside from the truth. Slowly but surely, her prejudice against the other woman was starting to dissolve.

Suddenly, Clara's phone rang.

She dug it out her gown pocket, checked the caller ID and answered it.

Rachel sat quietly, listening to Clara talk and to the chatter on the other end of the line. She heard something about "patient", "blood oxygen" and "consulting room".

As Clara lowered her phone from her ear, she looked apologetically at Rachel. "Sorry, I have to go... There is a last minute surgery discussion I have to attend."

"No worries at all. I know how important work is," Rachel said calmly.

Clara slipped her phone back into her gown and stood with a nod. "I'll see you then. I'll ask one of my colleagues to arrange that prenatal check-up for you as soon as possible."

Rachel nodded.

Clara had only taken a few steps away before she stopped and turned around. "Miss Bennet," she said seriously, "if we had met before all this nonsense had happened, I think the two of us would have been great friends."

Then she left before Rachel could reply.

Rachel turned in her chair and stared at the closed door after Clara had left. She found it strange that she'd suddenly say something like that. But she didn't let it worry her for long. Once she was certain she was alone again, she picked up the tablet and continued her search for information on Abby.

# Chapter 115 Her First Prenatal Checkup

Outside the inpatient building, a black Maybach pulled over at the foot of the stairs. 1

The driver glanced at the rearview mirror, and said, "Mr. Sullivan, we're here."

Victor was currently sitting in the backseat, resting his eyes. When he heard the driver speak, he looked outside the window. Since it was already lunchtime, there were several food delivery men walking in and out of the building.

The look on Victor's face made it hard for anyone to tell what he was thinking at the moment.

As a matter of fact, he didn't even know why he went here. After the meeting at the International Conference Center, he immediately got into his car. When the driver asked him if he was going back to the company building, Rachel's ghastly pale face as she lay on the bed the other night flashed through Victor's mind.

This wasn't the first time that he just thought of her out of the blue.

Over the past few days, whenever he was idle, he would think of what Rachel told her that night.

She said that out of everyone in this world, he was the one who wanted her dead the most. Every word that came out of her mouth was like a needle, stabbing into his heart. And every time he thought of it, he could feel his heart ache. The feeling wasn't that strong, but it was enough to make it difficult for him to ignore.

"Take me to the hospital," he said to the driver. And before long, they arrived at the hospital. A long silence ensued inside the car. The driver vigilantly glanced at the rearview mirror, hoping to see the look on Victor's face. However, it was too dark inside the car to see his face clearly.

While the driver was hesitant to speak, Victor finally broke his silence.

"You can go back first, but come back to pick me in an hour." Having said that, he opened the door, and got out of the car.

The driver respectfully responded to his command, and watched him walk into the inpatient building before stepping on the accelerator and driving away.

After Victor entered the hospital, he went straight into the elevator.

At that very moment, his phone started ringing.

He glanced at the caller ID, and saw that it was Ivan. "What?" Victor asked flatly.

"Sir, Tripp has been staying at home since he left the police station. He hasn't contacted anyone for the past two days, and no questionable source of income has been found in any of his family member's bank accounts," Ivan reported. "But when we checked the surveillance footage recorded by the nearby cameras, we found someone suspicious.

This perpetrator must've been following Miss Bennet for a long time. Unfortunately, he had covered himself well enough to prevent the cameras from capturing his face," Ivan continued.

Victor raised his head to look at the screen above the elevator. His eyes glinted when he saw that it was currently on the fifth floor.

"Mr. Sullivan?" Ivan asked when he heard no response from Victor. Confused, he glanced at the screen and found that the call was still in progress.

"Who do you think it could be?" Victor asked tentatively.

Finally, the elevator arrived at his floor. Victor entered the elevator, and pressed the button for the floor where Rachel's ward was located.

"I'm not sure, sir," Ivan said with a frown.

Two years ago, everyone believed that Odin would inherit the Sullivan Group, but to their surprise, Victor inherited the company instead. Once he assumed office, their business reached greater heights within a short period of time. However, Victor changed so many things within the company that invoked the ire of almost all the members of the board.

Thus, it was harder to narrow down the list of suspects that would go after Rachel.

It was highly likely that they noticed that Victor got even closer to Rachel after their divorce. And as a result, they wanted to take advantage of her to get back at Victor.

After all, they still wanted Odin to return and take charge. It wouldn't be surprising if those scheming lowlifes were up to something just to get rid of Victor.

Or perhaps it could be one of the rivals of the Sullivan Group. The news that Victor had taken Rachel to Yaprye to attend his mentor's birthday party, and went home with her had already spread throughout the city. If their business rivals knew that, they would definitely not let this ripe opportunity to destroy Victor pass.

Of course, there were still other possibilities.

As Ivan's expression turned grim, the image of a woman appeared in his mind. 'Maria...' He had worked for Victor long enough to have seen all sorts of people. But out of every wicked person Ivan had ever met, Maria was the worst of all. He could still remember how she uttered the most vicious words with the most elegant smile plastered on her face.

The mere thought of her made Ivan shudder. "For some reason, I feel like the culprit looks a little familiar. I think I've seen him somewhere."

At this moment, the elevator arrived at the designated floor.

Victor strode out and headed towards Rachel's ward. "Got it," he said to Ivan.

Upon hearing his answer, Ivan was confused by what he meant. "Mr. Sullivan, would you like us to proceed with the investigation? Perhaps we can..."

"Ivan, how long has it been since the incident happened?" Victor interrupted him.

Ivan fell silent for a moment before he replied, "Three days, sir."

From where Victor was standing, he could see Rachel's ward. The door was closed, so he

couldn't see anything inside. He stopped in his tracks with a glum expression on his face.

"It's been three days, Ivan. Do you honestly think that he's still within Apliaria?"

"No, sir," Ivan replied.

'The probability of that happening is zero percent,' he thought.

Judging by the culprit's abilities, he's elusive and vigilant enough to avoid detection. Now that Rachel had suffered through the accident, he would definitely stop following her. Instead, he's going to leave Apliaria right away. Three days is more than enough for him to go anywhere.'

Victor decided to drop this subject and talk about something else. "Cancel my ten o'clock meeting. I'll be back later."

"Yes, sir," Ivan answered.

After disconnecting from the call, Victor opened the door and entered the ward.

"Mr. Sullivan," said a woman from behind him.

When Victor turned around, he found Clara whispering a few words to the nurse beside her. After the nurse had left, Clara walked up to Victor and asked, "Mr. Sullivan, are you here to visit Miss Bennet?"

Silence befell Victor as he stared at Clara.

The door was ajar. Clara peeked inside through the crack of the door, and glanced at the time on her wristwatch. "I thought you wouldn't come today."

Victor was confused by what she was implying. "What are you trying to say?"

"So you don't know? Today is Miss Bennet's first prenatal checkup." Clara was a bit surprised to hear him say that. She initially thought that Victor was here to accompany Rachel for the prenatal checkup.

She specially came to Rachel's ward to ask Rachel if she should inform Victor about the checkup. After all, he was the baby's father.

However, Rachel refused decisively.

But Clara could tell that Rachel was just pretending to be strong. After all, what woman wouldn't want the father of her child to accompany her for the prenatal checkup?

The look on Victor's face froze, but he soon regained his stoic expression. "Where is she now?"

"She's on the third floor of the Department of Gynecology building. But I think her checkup is almost finished by now," Clara said as she put her hands into her pockets.

# Chapter 116 He's Dead

The elevator door slid open on the third floor of the Department of Gynecology building. Victor and Clara stepped out.

Clara glanced up at his profile, studying his strong jaw, pursed lips and cold eyes. He looked intimidating. And when he spoke, he was even more so.

Looking at him now, Clara thought back to what Rachel had said to her on the balcony.

Clara hadn't known Rachel for very long, but she could already tell that Rachel was a woman who valued freedom. She wasn't the type of person who coped well with being kept captive. But Victor was someone who enjoyed control. He wanted everything to be under his rule, and never allowed anything, or anyone, to operate outside his idea of a perfect plan.

Victor and Rachel were two different people from different worlds. They had nothing in common.

Yet somehow, they'd still gotten married. Rachel had never been part of Victor's plan. Marrying her had certainly been very far out of bounds for him. Maybe that was why he hated her so much. Maybe that was why he was willing to risk his family's reputation to humiliate her.

And now this...

Rachel was pregnant with his child. There were many women in society who were better than she was. They were richer, came from good families, were well educated, and would no doubt bare a child for him. So why Rachel? The woman he hated so much...

Everyone in the upper-class society said that Victor was disgusted by Rachel. He always said that she was an insane, no good woman who wasn't capable of doing anything.

But now that Clara had met Rachel a few times and gotten to know her, and seen how Victor had reacted when he thought Rachel was getting an abortion, none of the rumors seemed to match up.

The corridor they were currently in was painted bright shades of pink and purple. Right in front of them was a huge sign that said 'Department of Gynecology' hanging above a glass door. Through the glass doors and panels they could see many pregnant women sitting waiting for their appointments. They were all there with either their husband or a family member. It was for that reason that the single woman sitting all by herself caught their eyes. It was Rachel.

She had a paper cup clutched in her hand, as if this was the only thing preventing her falling over. Her face was very pale, and it looked like she was trying her best not to vomit. The corners of her eyes were slightly red because of her recent throwing up. The bright color only made her pale complexion that much more striking.

They saw her swallow harshly, take a deep breath, and then take a small sip of whatever



was in the cup. She immediately clapped her hand over her mouth, fearful that she'd spit it out.

She repeated this several more times until the contents of the cup was evidently finished. By now her face was ghastly white.

Victor stared at her through the glass, fixing her with one of his most intense stares. He frowned when she didn't seem to notice him.

"I think she's getting ready for the second last procedure," Clara said gently from behind him. "That was a glucose solution she was drinking. She had to finish the cup within five minutes. It's very, very sweet. Some pregnant woman can't stand the taste, others find it makes them feel sick after they drink it." <sup>1</sup>

Clara watched Victor's expression reflected in the glass.

He said nothing. But his eyes did narrow, and his face did darken.

As Clara was about to ask him if he wanted to go in, her phone rang. She checked the screen to see it was a call from one of her colleagues.

She didn't bother to answer. She just hung up. "Mr. Sullivan, I'm afraid I have to go now."

"Okay," Victor replied in a low voice.

Clara put her phone in her pocket and turned to leave. She hadn't gone far when she suddenly stopped and turned around to look at Victor again.

"I don't think Miss Bennet has had breakfast yet. That solution she drank requires an empty stomach. There's a canteen on the first floor, Mr. Sullivan. If it's okay for you, I suggest you go and get Miss Bennet something to eat for after her appointment."

Again, Victor remained silent. He just raised his head to look at her, displeasure clearly evident on his face.

Clara was immediately uncomfortable under his gaze. She clenched her fists in her pockets to maintain her cool and lowered her eyes to the ground. "I wasn't telling you to do it. I was merely giving you a suggestion. I just remember how uncomfortable I felt when I was pregnant; that's all. It's hard for a pregnant woman to go through a prenatal check-up, especially if she's alone."

The elevator made a soft dinging sound as it arrived on the floor. The doors slid open, and Clara walked in without another word.

Once the elevator doors had closed, Victor turned back to continue staring at Rachel. Only, she was no longer there.

His brows furrowed as he was stepped into the hall and looked around for her.

After a while, he caught sight of Rachel.

She was now dressed in a purple hospital gown. It was a little too big for her thin body, and the color was vibrantly striking against her pale face. She looked so feeble, like a gust of wind could easily blow her over.

That deep-seated ache panged in Victor's heart again. He clenched his fists against the

feeling.

Rachel held her hand out to the nurse. The nurse put a small device over her finger that pricked her. As the small beads of blood started gathering on her fingertip, the nurse collected the sample and stemmed the bleeding with a cotton swab.

Rachel's face remained perfectly expressionless throughout the entire process. She didn't even wince when the needle pricked her finger. In comparison, the woman next to her nervously clenched her husband's hand before the nurse even slid the device over her finger. "Are you here alone? Don't you have anyone with you? Where is the baby's father?" the nurse asked Rachel as she scribbled down notes.

Rachel took a look at her still bleeding finger, took out a piece of tissue and pressed it gently. "He's dead," she said indifferently.

The nurse paused in her writing. She looked up at Rachel with an apologetic smile. "I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to bring that up."

With a slightly embarrassed expression, the nurse lowered her head and continued writing. Rachel smiled softly. As she was about to assure the nurse that it was alright, she felt a cold, oppressive weight descend upon her. Even though the room was warm, she felt the temperature dip so quickly that the hair on her arms stood up.

She shivered and raised her head to see what had caused the disturbance.

Suddenly, a tall figure appeared at her side.

The light that had been shining on her a moment ago was cut off, and she was overshadowed by the shadow of a tall man.

Rachel blinked, just to make sure she wasn't seeing things. As her eyes fluttered open, her gaze locked with that of the newcomer.

Rachel was just starting to wonder if he'd heard what she'd said when the nurse raised her head and said to him, "You can bring your wife here. We just need to take a small blood sample." Obviously, she thought he was someone else's husband.

Without taking a breath, the nurse took a form off her clipboard and handed it to Rachel. "When you're done with the ultrasound, you can hand this in at the desk on the first floor. The results will be sent to you within the next two days."

"Okay, thank you."

The nurse smiled warmly at her. "You're most welcome. I'm sorry for what I said earlier... You're a very strong woman for doing this alone."

"Why?" Rachel asked her softly.

"It's hard to be a young, single mother. Without the child's father, life is going to be so hard. Most women your age would choose to have an abortion, but you've decided to keep it and raise it on your own. I really admire you." the nurse said with a smile. She was totally oblivious to how dark Victor's expression had become.

And just how cold his gaze was.

Rachel looked down, hooding her eyes with her long lashes. She reached up to touch the tip of her nose, but before she could, someone grabbed her tightly around the wrist and dragged her away.

# Chapter 117 The Ultrasound

"Hey!" the nurse said in surprise when she saw Victor drag Rachel away. She wanted to stop him, but wasn't quick enough.

Victor completely ignored her. He marched Rachel over to a quiet corner, regardless of the nurse's protest.

Rachel tried to fight against him, but she quickly gave up. Victor was a strong man, and he was even more so when he was angry. He tugged her to stand in front of him, staring down at her with an expressionless face. But even devoid of a visible emotion, his eyes and presence were still oppressive.

Rachel diverted her gaze and looked down at her wrist. The pale, delicate skin was an angry, glaring red.

Victor really didn't know how to treat a lady.

"So... The baby's father is dead?" He squeezed every word out from between clenched teeth. His head throbbed with the effort of trying to keep his temper under control while his eyes bored into Rachel.

Rachel turned her head away to look off to the side; that was when she saw his hand. Victor had very beautiful hands; long-fingered, fair and boney. When she'd still been part of the Red Hackers, everyone had said that Quintin's hands were lovely. She's spent hours staring at them, trying to figure out what they meant by that. To her, they just looked like ordinary men's hands. Nothing special.

Only when she had met Victor had she finally understood what they meant by men having beautiful hands. Because if there was ever a man who had beautiful hands, it was Victor. She believed that they'd be beautiful even when they were caked in mud. There was just something about his long, elegant fingers that held a note of beauty.

But now she could see his delicate bones sharply through his skin, and his fingertips were curved ever so slightly inwards. Evidently, he was trying to hang onto his temper.

As beautiful as those hands were, Rachel had a feeling that he wouldn't hesitate to punch her in the face at any given second.

This thought was enough to break her silence. "I think you misheard me," she said calmly.

"Misheard?" Victor said in an eerily calm voice. "Rachel, have I been too nice to you recently? Don't forget who you are."

"..." Rachel raised her head and looked directly into his ironic eyes. She smiled and said, "Are you going to threaten me again? Say that you would not go easy on me if it's not for the child?"

Victor frowned in displeasure.

Rachel narrowed her eyes in an overly confident manner. "Just cut the crap. Even with this child, I know you won't hold back if you lose your temper. If I had a choice, I wouldn't bear

your child. Even if you were the last man alive on this earth."

If she had known what lengths Victor would go to; if she had known that he'd threaten her with Abby and Andy, and make her life into a living hell, she'd have aborted the child before she became attached to it.

Victor felt his heart squeeze painfully. It felt like someone had reached into his chest and was now gripping at his heart. If he thought he knew what heart ache was before, he'd been wrong. What he was feeling now was so much worse.

The temperature around him suddenly plummeted.

His already cold eyes turned icy. He reached forward, gripping her chin tightly, and said in a low voice, "So you're regretting it now?"

Rachel winced at the pain and gripped his wrist. She tried to pry his hand off her, but he was too strong. He barely even seemed to notice she was tugging on him.

Victor looked straight into her eyes. And she really did have beautiful eyes. They were dark, and usually glittered with a faint light, like stars on a cloudless night. They were so deep and soulful that it felt like one was getting lost if one stared into them for too long. He knew from experience that the corners of her eyes curved when she smiled...

But there was no light in them now. There was nothing but coldness and irritation.

He tried his best not to meet her eyes. He just clenched his jaw and tightened his grip.

Rachel took a deep breath, then gasped when a spike of pain shot through her jaw.

Victor relaxed his grip when he saw he was hurting her. But she didn't do or say anything more. She just gritted her teeth and stayed silent. Her face was pale, her eyes were tired and her expression was morbid. But still, she refused to give in.

When had she become like this?

He gave a small shake of his head to detach himself from his wild thoughts. Keeping his expression hard and aggressive he ordered, "Answer me!" He hated it when a situation wasn't under his control.

"Fine. What do you want to know?" Rachel sneered.

Victor was slightly taken aback by this. He blinked momentarily as he stared down at her in confusion. He actually didn't know what he wanted to hear.

That she regretted everything?

That she regretting having his baby?

He gnashed his teeth together as the pain in his heart got worse.

"Miss Rachel Bennet! Please come with me for the ultrasound!" said a nurse from behind them. Her voice broke through their quarrel and defused what might have become a volatile situation.

Just as Rachel was starting to think of ways to force him to let her go, Victor dropped his hand to his side and stepped away. With a cruel, cold look on his face, he turned around and left.

Rachel breathed a small sigh of relief. At least that was over. She turned to speak to the nurse, only to find the woman was already standing beside her. She glanced down at a photo pinned to her clipboard, then up at Rachel. "You are Miss Rachel Bennet, correct?"

"Yes?" Rachel said in confusion.

The nurse frowned as she said, "We've been calling you forever already. Hurry now. Go to the second room. There are other ladies waiting and you're holding them up."

Rachel nodded and hurried towards the ultrasound room, taking measured breaths to calm herself as she went.

Just as Victor reached the elevator, someone grabbed him by his upper arm. "Hey! What on earth is wrong with you?"

Victor stopped and glanced down at the hand on his arm. With a frown, he looked up at the woman.

It was the nurse who had sent Rachel to have her ultrasound. She looked displeased, and she was frowning in such a way that it creased her eyebrows. "You're a really lousy husband, you know that? Didn't you hear me just now when I said your wife was going in for the ultrasound? What kind of husband leaves his wife to have an ultrasound alone?"

Victor narrowed his eyes and his frown deepened.

"Why are you still standing here staring at me? Go!" the nurse urged when he didn't move.

The nurse had seen her fair share of irresponsible fathers before. Most of them sometimes left their wives alone, took phone calls or played games on their phones. But this was the first time she had ever seen someone so blatantly turn their back on a woman and leave. Not to mention it was just before an ultrasound.

Victor frowned and said in a low voice, "Let go of me."

The nurse blinked in surprise. She nearly let him go. It was the natural effect his voice had on people; as if they weren't allowed to refuse whatever command he gave them.

It was at this exact moment that the elevator arrived.

Victor raised his head and looked at the slowly opening elevator doors. He chomped on his back teeth, then narrowed his eyes. "Where is she now?" he asked in a low voice, just as the nurse thought he was going to be stubborn and refuse.

"Excuse me?" The nurse was still so surprised from earlier that she barely comprehended what he was saying.

"Where is she having the ultrasound?" Victor asked expressionlessly.

The nurse blinked away her daze and said, "Come with me. I'll show you."

She let go of him and turned to show him the way. Now that she was no longer looking at him, the intensity of his words came back to her, hitting her with the full force of their chill. She couldn't help but shiver at the memory. This man was terrifying.

Victor followed the nurse quietly all the way to Ultrasound Room 2.

The nurse carefully pushed the door open to reveal the room beyond. With the curtain pulled

around the bed, it was impossible to see anything more than just a vague silhouette sitting on the bed.

"At 12 weeks you can see the outline of the baby on the monitor. I know becoming a father is a scary thing, and I know you're probably not ready for it, but once you see your baby, you'll be ready," the nurse said softly.

## Chapter 118 Odin Is My Only Child

"I don't think there is a parent out there that doesn't love their child," the nurse said to Victor with a smile. "Sir, I think you should go in now."

She turned around and carefully pulled the door closed before she left.

"I don't think there is a parent out there that doesn't love their child."

The nurse's words rang through Victor's head like a taunt. His eyes darkened, taking on a faraway expression as memories of his childhood resurfaced. He keenly remembered the day his grandmother had come to fetch him from the dilapidated ruins that had been his home and taken him to the Sullivan family's mansion.

It was the same day the car accident had happened. He'd been so young then, standing barefoot in the corridor of the hospital, outside the operating room. He stood there for half an hour, silent and waiting, until the doctor finally walked out. With a grim expression the doctor said softly, "I am sorry... We tried our best. Please tell your elders to prepare for your mother's funeral. Again... I'm sorry for your loss."

That was all the doctor said before he left.

Victor didn't even know how he made his way out of the hospital. He remembered nothing of his journey home, nor the sights and smells around him. It was like his little world had gone dark. Nothing but the doctor's words rang inside his head. He hardly remembered stepping into the home where he and his mother had lived together. Through his numb grief, he somehow found her diary, and in it, a phone number.

He remembered that his mother had once told him to phone this number if anything ever happened to her. She'd told him to tell the person her name.

He didn't know who the number belonged to.

All he knew was that he had to call someone to handle his mother's funeral. She couldn't stay in the morgue. He'd been in there once and it had been so very cold... He knew how much his mother hated the cold. He knew she wouldn't want to stay in there.

Like a good, obedient little boy, Victor dialed the number and waited until the call was picked up. The voice on the other end belonged to an elderly woman.

"Hello, who's speaking?" The voice was soft and gentle, soothing in a way he had never expected. He hadn't cried when his mother had passed out from blood loss. He hadn't cried when the doctor came to tell him his mother was gone. But now, hearing that gentle, kind voice, tears finally sprung to his eyes and streamed down his cheeks.

He cried so hard that the tears dripped off his jaw and onto the diary, blurring the phone number that had been written there before.

"Hello? Is there someone there?" the woman said.

Victor sniffed in a deep breath to try and calm himself. He gripped the phone tightly, trying



to keep the quiver out his voice as he said his mother's name and then everything else.

The woman on the other end of the line went silent.

She was silent for such a long time that he thought she may have already hung up. The only thing that told Victor she was still on the call was the slight crackle on the line.

"Where... Where are you right now?" the woman said in a voice that sounded ever so slightly excited, but Victor could tell she was crying.

Victor's little hand curled on the end of the diary. His fingers shook, and his skin was pale. He held onto the paper so tightly that his knuckles went white, making it look as though it had taken all his strength to speak.

"My mother," he choked on his words as he glanced down at photo in the diary. It was of him and his mother. They were standing in front of a fountain together. She had her hand on his shoulder and was smiling gently at the camera.

"My mother is dead..."

Suddenly, there was a loud bang from the other end of the phone. The woman was silent for a while before she said in a trembling voice, "Child, where are you?"

He gave the woman his address through barely suppressed sobs. "Good boy," she said, "just stay there. Don't go anywhere. I'll be there right now."

"Okay... I'll wait..."

Victor lowered the receiver and put it down without disconnecting the call. He didn't have to wait long until there was a knock at the door. He waited until a woman entered, and he knew immediately that this was the owner of the voice. She was dressed in a cheongsam, and her hair was slightly wild, as if she'd left home in a hurry.

She looked down at Victor and almost instantly, tears glittered in her eyes. She came forward and put her hands on his slim, small shoulders. Then the tears leaked out the corners of her eyes and down her cheeks. "You must be my grandson," she murmured. "You look so much like your father..."

Victor clutched his mother's diary tightly in his hands and allowed the woman to lead him downstairs.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"My name is... My name is Victor Sullivan."

The woman had only just managed to stop her tears, but at the mention of his name, she started crying again. "Sullivan? I thought she hated him so much that she'd never..."

Victor stopped walking and looked up at her, blinking in confusion.

The woman looked down at his puzzled expression and smiled softly. She reached out and gently touched his head saying, "There are things I'll tell you when you're older. Now is not the time."

Victor looked at the ground and said nothing.

His little face remained cold and expressionless. For a child of seven years old, he was

remarkably quiet and calm after just losing his mother, which was strange.

"Victor," the woman said softly and bent down so she was eye-level with him. "I'm your grandmother. You're going to be staying with me from now on, alright?"

Victor just stared at her silently. The only thing he did was purse his lips, but that was as much reaction as he gave her.

"It's alright. Everything is going to be fine," the woman said when he gave no reaction. "You just take your time. I'm not going to force you to talk. I'll wait until you're comfortable."

She gave him a small pat on the shoulder, then led him outside.

"Hello, Mr. Sullivan!"

The greeting came in unison from a dozen men dressed in black. They were waiting outside the door, smiling pleasantly. Just past them, Victor could see six black Bentleys parked in a tidy row along the side of the road.

Carolyn, Victor's grandmother, looked down at him worriedly when the men greeted him so loud. She was worried he'd be frightened, or feel intimidated by their presence, but she was surprised to find that he was calm. In fact, he hadn't so much as changed his expression.

Any other seven-year-old boy would have been scared out their mind when seeing something like this for the first time.

But if anything, Victor seemed to be anticipating this.

Carolyn led him to the first car in the row and helped him in. She climbed in next to him and, at a signal from her, the convoy slowly moved off in the direction of the Sullivan family's house.

After a one and a half hours' drive, they finally arrived.

Even though it was still relatively early in the morning, there was someone waiting for them at the gate. The car pulled to a stop outside the house and Carolyn quickly got out before going to help Victor. She led him to the door where a servant changed his shoes, and then she took him into the living room.

"Mother, why did you want me to return at such short notice?" said a deep male voice from one of the sofas.

Victor turned his head in the direction of the voice. Sitting on one of the sofas was a man. He was leaning back against the back rest, and had the ankle of one leg crossed over onto the opposite knee. Beside him sat a gorgeous, well-dressed woman.

As soon as he laid eyes on him, Victor had the vaguest feeling that this man was supposed to mean something to him.

The two of them bore a striking resemblance to each other.

"What's with this attitude? Does a mother really need a reason to want her son to come home?" Carolyn said in displeasure.

"That's not what I meant and you know it. Odin is still in hospital with a fever. We need to be there to take care of him. He's your grandson. Aren't you worried about him?" the man

said in a gentler tone.

Odin.

That was the first time Victor heard that name.

Maria, the woman sitting beside the man, was the first one out the two of them to notice Victor. Her eyes narrowed, and a complicated expression came over her face.

"Don't talk such nonsense. Of course I am!" Carolyn looked down at Victor and noticed the tense set of his shoulders. She reached down and tenderly laid a hand on his back. Looking up at the man, she asked, "Do you recognize this boy?"

She gently nudged him forward as she spoke so the man could get a good look at him.

The man lazily raised his eyes to look at Victor. Then the expression on his face froze. "You..." he said slowly.

Carolyn took Victor's hand and gave his fingers a small squeeze. "Victor, this is your father."

Victor had barely even drawn a breath before the man angrily shot to his feet. "Father?" he shouted. "This is not the time for jokes. Mom, this is a serious situation. You know Odin is my only child." 1

## Chapter 119 The Child's Heartbeat

"Odin is my only child."

Those were the first words his biological father said to him.

Carolyn didn't expect that her son would react that way, and she didn't imagine he would say that. "I'm being serious. I'm not messing around. Do you think I'll casually bring a child here, and say that he's yours? This really is your son! You brought him to this world, don't you remember?"

The man she was talking to was stunned. It appeared as though he remembered something. Victor lowered his head in an attempt to hide his emotions.

Carolyn took a deep breath, and said to Victor, "Victor, there's no need to be scared. Grandma's here to protect you. He won't hurt you! He's your father."

Victor fell silent. The look on the man's face was too obscure to figure out what he was thinking.

"Call him 'dad', Victor," Carolyn said softly.

Upon hearing her say that, Victor clenched her hands. During the past seven years of his life, he had never addressed anyone as "dad". But now, his mother was gone and he himself was suddenly told to call someone that. To Victor, that word was too heavy to say out loud.

"No!" Before Victor could utter the word, the man interrupted him. "You don't have to call me that right now. Who knows if this boy is actually my child? Perhaps he just happens to look like me."

Upon hearing him say that, Carolyn was livid. She really wanted to slap her son in the face. "What the hell are you saying?"

Suddenly, Victor grabbed her hand in an attempt to stop her.

Carolyn fell silent. "Victor, what is it?"

When Victor looked into her eyes, he said, "Grandma, did what you said earlier still count?"

Carolyn was fazed. "What... What did you just call me? Can you... Can you say that again?" Her voice was trembling with emotions.

Victor lowered his head and said nothing.

Seeing that he wasn't answering, Carolyn gathered that he hadn't gotten used to saying it. Gently, she said to the boy, "It's okay. If you don't want to call me that, you don't have to. But my words hold true."

"I..." Victor looked at her once more.

"What do you want to say?" asked Carolyn.

"Can I really live with you?" To make it clearer, he added, "Just you and me. Is that okay?"

From that moment on, Victor realized that his own father didn't acknowledge him as his son,

and he never tried to call him "dad". Even when the man was dying in bed, he just stood at the door, staring at him in silence.

There weren't many people in this world who would truly scorn their children.

But sadly, Victor was one of the few unlucky enough to be hated and abandoned by his own father.

"Miss Bennet, according to the results, the wine you drank before didn't harm the baby in any way. In fact, your child is extremely healthy."

The doctor's voice interrupted Victor's thoughts. He saw the silhouette of a woman on the curtain, slightly tilting her head to look at the screen of the instrument.

Slowly, the doctor moved the handle, and the picture moved along with his motion. Within seconds, the screen turned to the side of the baby.

Rachel stared at it, too stunned to react.

The sonogram was grayish white. In the middle, a small figure was curling into a ball. Its two small hands were clenched into fists before its eyes, and its legs were bent. It was very quiet.

'This is the child that's been in my womb for three months?' Rachel thought.

The doctor smiled at her and pointed at the monitor. "Ma'am, that's your baby."

In order to allow Rachel to see it more clearly, the doctor drew the monitor closer to Rachel's side, and put the handle on the side of her abdomen. "I must say, Miss Bennet, you're a gorgeous woman. I'm sure your baby will be just as beautiful as you are! Look at its tall nose. It must've inherited its nose from you." 2

Rachel stared at the little one on the monitor and saw how it moved slightly. It appeared unsatisfied by its posture, and it was now holding its arms down.

The doctor was right. Even though the picture wasn't that clear, Rachel could see that her child indeed had a tall nose.

This put a smile on her face. Suddenly, she felt that every suffering and grievance she experienced in the past were all worth it. She wondered whether her child was a boy or a girl.

"Ma'am, would you like to hear your baby's heartbeat?" the doctor asked.

"The baby's heartbeat?"

"Well, it hasn't been twelve weeks yet, so the baby's heartbeat is relatively weak. It would be heard to tell using an ordinary stethoscope, but you'll be able to hear the baby's heartbeat through the Doppler ultrasound," the doctor said as he pressed the speaker button.

Thump!

Thump!

Thump!

The sound of the baby's heartbeat resonated from the speaker. It was steady and powerful,

and Rachel felt like it touched her heart.

Subconsciously, she clenched her hands. An indescribably feeling arose in her heart.

It wasn't until the doctor handed her a piece of tissue that she realized that tears had fallen from her eyes.

Meanwhile, Victor was about to leave the room. The moment he heard the baby's heartbeat, his hand froze on the doorknob. He felt like his heartstrings were plucked. Somehow, it made him feel like an empty void in his heart was filled with something he had been longing to feel.

This child was a life that he and Rachel created.

In less than seven months, that baby would be borne into this world.

Victor couldn't resist the urge to imagine what his child would look like in the future. It was then that he realized that hope was formed in his heart.

The look on his face froze.

'How could I look forward to the baby that I made with that woman?

It's probably just because she's been causing me so much trouble that she flashed through my head every now and then,' Victor said in his head. 'A woman like Rachel doesn't deserve to bear my child.'

All of a sudden, his eyes turned cold as he pressed his lips.

Afterwards, he turned the doorknob, opened the door, and left without hesitation.

After having stayed in the hospital for a week, Rachel finally went home to the Sue Garden.

The moment Lukas saw her, he sighed with relief. "My, my! You've just slowly been putting on some weight, but you've already lost it all after staying in that hospital for a week."

Upon hearing this, Rachel stared at Lukas, lost in thought. Somehow, he reminded her of Abby.

Abby would always follow her around, checking on her well-being. And while walking around, from time to time, Abby would sigh and mumble, "Miss Bennet, you're getting thinner again. That's not healthy at all!"

Lukas turned to the servant next to him and said, "Tell the nutritionist to adjust the menu, and cook Miss Bennet's favorite dishes." Then, he noticed that Rachel was absentminded. Concerned of her mental well-being, he asked, "Miss Bennet?"

At this time, Rachel came to her senses.

"Miss Bennet, you've only just gotten back from the hospital. Would you like to head upstairs and get some rest?" Lukas asked.

Rachel nodded firmly before heading to the stairs. Suddenly, something dawned on her that made her call out to Lukas to stop him from leaving. "Lukas?" she asked.

"Yes, Ma'am? What can I do for you?"

"I don't need anything." Rachel narrowed her eyes and asked, "But, um... do you know if

Victor will come home today?"

"Two days ago, Ivan called to say that Mr. Sullivan has went on a business trip, but he didn't mention if Mr. Sullivan would come back anytime soon. Is there something important you'd like to tell him?" Lukas replied.

'Two days ago?

Isn't that the day of my prenatal checkup?'

All of a sudden, Rachel remembered what the nurse said to her.

The nurse asked Rachel, "Miss Bennet, where's your husband? I saw him go into the ultrasonic room after you. Didn't you leave the room together?"

"He was there?" Rachel asked.

Upon hearing this, the nurse realized that Victor must've left in advance. Afraid that Rachel would get sad if she found out, the nurse said, "I'm sorry, I must've been mistaken. It was probably some other pregnant woman's husband."

When Rachel heard Lukas' words now, she thought that the nurse really was mistaken.

'Yeah, right. How could that bastard be there? Five minutes before I entered the room, he was still ridiculing me. To him, I'm nothing but a woman happens to carry his child!'

# Chapter 120 Alicia Fell Into The Water

"Miss Bennet?" Lukas called out to Rachel in confusion, seeing she had yet to respond after a long time.

Rachel's eyes narrowed for a moment. Then, the corners of her lips curled up into a faint smile. "Nothing. I was just asking,"

she casually said, after which she yawned. It had been a long day, and she was exhausted. After saying goodbye to Lukas, she headed upstairs to her bedroom.

Rachel fell asleep the instant her body hit the bed. However, the welcome serenity didn't last for long; she was soon jolted awake by a loud knock on her bedroom door.

"Miss Schultz is here to see you," Lukas said from the other side of the door.

Rachel stared blankly at the door, trying to get her head together. After thinking for a while, she recalled who Miss Schultz was and frowned.

Although she was still sleepy, she got out of bed and waddled to the door. "Lukas, did you say Alicia Schultz is here to see me?" She asked the moment she opened the door. Lukas nodded politely and replied, "Yes, Miss Bennet. That's what she said." Lukas also found the sudden visit strange. He knew Alicia quite well, as he had been working there for a long time. Back when the old Mrs. Sullivan was still alive, she appreciated Alicia. If Rachel hadn't been in the picture, she might have married Victor.

It was the first time Alicia had been to the Sue Garden after Victor got married.

'Why did she come here so all of a sudden? Why would she ask to see Miss Bennet?'

Lukas pondered silently. He considered the matter a serious one, though, and was thinking of calling Victor right away to fill him in on what was happening. Rachel was pregnant, after all, and he couldn't be completely certain that nothing untoward would happen.

"Is she in the living room now?" Rachel asked, raising her eyebrows. Her voice was a little slow and inadvertently languid, perhaps because she had just woken up.

"No," Lukas quickly said, pushing aside his thoughts. "She is in the garden now."

Rachel nodded and walked away. When she walked into the garden, she saw Alicia sitting on a chair at the corridor.

Atop the garden was a grape rack covered in lush, intertwining vines. The healthy vines cut through the sunlight permeating the garden, forming thin light spots on the ground. As a cool breeze blew through the surrounding, the surface of a small artificial lake nearly rippled. Many would consider this beautiful garden a paradise.

When Alicia heard approaching footsteps, she looked straight at the archway. She stood up, folded her arms across her chest, and arrogantly looked at Rachel, who had just walked in.

Rachel didn't care, though. She just sat down on a garden chair nearby and stared silently, waiting for Alicia to speak. As far as she was concerned, she had said all she needed to say



to Alicia at the restaurant a week ago.

However, judging by Alicia's sudden visit and haughty attitude, it seemed she hadn't heeded her warning, after all.

"I heard you had a car accident that day," Alicia said in a contemptuous tone. "I see you're perfectly fine, though. I couldn't help wondering, Rachel, if you plan to frame me for this. Don't even think about it!" she sneered.

The confidence with which Alicia had uttered the accusation left Rachel speechless.

She couldn't help but wonder how Alicia had jumped to that conclusion.

Then, Rachel remembered that Victor said she had stood in the middle of the road on purpose. They were quite identical. In fact, she could even say they were well-matched.

In their eyes, Rachel was a vicious woman who would risk anything—even things as important as her life and her baby's life—to win sympathy

To them, she was too cheap.

Then...

A thought suddenly crossed Rachel's mind, and she narrowed her beautiful eyes at Alicia.

"I just know you were up to no good, but unfortunately for you, your plan failed; Victor wouldn't believe you," Alicia said, snorting haughtily. It was as though she hadn't noticed the coldness in Rachel's eyes.

"Who told you I was in a car accident?" Rachel asked, her voice suddenly turning cold as she stared down Alicia with hostility.

Alicia was taken aback.

Rachel stood up and walked menacingly toward her. "And who told you I was pregnant before?"

Rachel had been in the hospital for a week. She couldn't go out and had nothing much to do, so she had spent a considerable amount of time thinking about what happened that day. She had initially believed the accident to be just that—an accident. However, the longer she thought about it, the stronger she felt that something was wrong.

Back then, she barely got a moment to react before she was pushed to the middle of the road. The push didn't seem accidental by some hasty passer-by. Instead, it seemed someone already behind her had pushed her into traffic at the right time.

"I-I just heard about it," Alicia stuttered, cowering a bit under the intense stare. She felt a little guilty and subconsciously took a step back to keep her distance.

"You just heard about it?" Rachel slowly asked in a scary voice. From who?"

"My friend, of course!" Alicia answered defensively. Then, she suddenly wondered why she was answering Rachel's questions. "Rachel, are you trying to dig another hole for me?" she demanded hotly. "I don't have to tell you where I heard that from. It's none of your business! Why do I have to tell you anything?"

Rachel's eyes narrowed. It was apparent Alicia was hiding something.

This feeling wasn't new to her. Back then, at the restaurant, she also had a faint feeling that something wasn't right, but she didn't pay the ominous feeling much attention.

It was now clear that whoever was behind all this wanted to kill her.

"Alicia, do you think I won't find out if you don't tell me?" Rachel said with a faint smile. "I can tell you clearly that someone pushed me onto the road on purpose."

"Are you insinuating that I pushed you?" Alicia's eyes widened. You had better watch your words!" she bellowed in outrage, reacting quickly. "Rachel! Don't try to frame me!" she yelled, pointing at herself. "Why would I push you?"

Rachel's eyes turned colder. When she raised her head, the surface of her icy pupils reflected Alicia's angry face.

"I saw you before the accident."

"So what?!"

"Alicia, don't you remember what you did?" Rachel asked with a cold smile.

"..." Alicia's facial expression instantly changed.

"Everyone knows we don't get along. That day, you ordered a table of food that was unhealthy for a pregnant woman. Do you think I didn't notice? And in less than an hour later, after we had parted ways, I got into the car accident,"

Rachel slowly said, drawing out her words on purpose.

Alicia clenched her fists and gritted her teeth. "I didn't push you," she stiffly replied, ditching her earlier arrogance.

"I would never do that, no matter how jealous I am of you. If I was really that shameless, why did I stop you from eating those dishes at the restaurant in the first place?" Alicia quickly said. She wasn't sure if Rachel would buy her claim, though.

It was apparent to her that those words weren't enough to prove her innocence.

After all, Rachel already knew she couldn't eat the food, so it wouldn't have mattered if she hadn't stopped her. Her words meant nothing.

This thought made Alicia panic. "I-I really didn't push you. I—"

"I know it's not you," Rachel said, interrupting her. "But do you think others will believe it?"

"..." Alicia trembled for a moment. "What do you want," she asked, biting her lip.

"Who told you about my pregnancy and the car accident?" Rachel asked in a calm and cold voice, staring straight into her eyes.

Alicia struggled to contain her emotions. Her lips trembled, and Maria's face and warning appeared in her mind.

She couldn't tell anyone. She had promised Aunt Maria she would never tell anyone.

"I..." Alicia hesitated for a moment and then said, "Rachel, just know it's my friend who told me, and she won't hurt you. Y- You're just overthinking this."

"Oh?" Rachel sneered. "How are you sure she won't?"

Alicia was shocked. Her heart sank, and she was momentarily at a loss for what to say in response.

"Well? You can't guarantee that she won't hurt me, right?" Rachel coldly said as she slowly walked forward.

Alicia's face turned whiter, and she continued cowering backward subconsciously, unaware of the steps behind her. Sensing that something was wrong, Rachel suddenly stopped. Narrowing her eyes, she looked behind Alicia and quickly stretched her hand to grab her. Alicia, who thought Rachel wanted to hurt her, jerked away and took another step backward.

"Ah!" She cried out as she missed her step and tumbled into the lake.

Splash! The water rose and splattered on Rachel's pants.

## Chapter 121 Are You Angry Or Jealous

"Help! Somebody help me! Help!" Alicia was thrashing and keeping herself above water as her face turned pale.

At this point, Rachel regained her senses. She was about to reach for Alicia's hand and pull her out of the water, but before she could move a muscle, someone shoved her away. That same person jumped into the water shortly after doing that.

Rachel didn't even have the time to recognize who that mysterious person was. The weight of her body caused her to stagger backwards until her back hit a wall.

All of a sudden, she heard someone chuckling from behind her.

Then, she realized something.

'Why is there a wall here?'

Rachel quickly moved away from the wall, turned around, and saw a man standing behind her. He was a whole head taller than her, so she had to raise her head to see his face clearly. The sun was a bit too dazzling, and she had to squint her eyes to look at him. "Carson, is that you?"

"It's been a while since I last saw you. It seems that you've grown more beautiful than ever, I see," Carson remarked casually, raising an eyebrow.

Rachel didn't take his words to heart, for she knew that he loved dishing out banter. 'Wait, if Carson is here, then who was that person who jumped into the lake?' she thought to herself.

Something dawned on her.

The second she thought of Victor, she heard the sound of someone coming ashore from behind her.

Rachel turned around and saw Victor slowly walking towards land while carrying Alicia. His face was as stoic as ever, and it intimidated anyone who saw it.

While Alicia was in his arms, her face was ghastly pale. Her arms were tightly wrapped around his neck, and her eyes were slammed shut. She must've been frightened to death, and she was still shivering from the fear.

"Mr. Sullivan!" The moment Lukas heard about what happened from one of the servants, he immediately came to see the situation.

Slowly, Alicia opened her eyes; the corners of her eyes were bloodshot. She loosened her arms on his neck, coughed several times, and asked, "Victor?"

After casting Rachel a cold glance, Victor said to Lukas, "Call the doctor."

"Right away, sir!" Lukas answered at once. Then, he went back to the villa to call the family doctor.

Meanwhile, Carson was leaning against the wooden pillar and looking at Rachel. Oddly enough, she seemed relatively nonchalant about what happened.

Upon noticing his gaze, she looked straight into his eyes. He didn't seem embarrassed at all when he got caught staring. And instead, he stared deeper into her eyes.

"Is there something you'd like to tell me?" Rachel asked.

Carson rubbed his chin with his thumb and index finger.

"I'm just wondering about something," he answered. "Wondering about what?" Rachel asked tentatively.

"I'm wondering if you're really not angry or you're just pretending to be calm on the surface, when in fact, you're actually jealous," Carson said with an impish grin. 1

Rachel was rendered speechless.

If something this tragic hadn't happened, she would've rolled her eyes at him.

"So, tell me, Miss Bennet. Are you not angry or jealous at all?" Carson asked again. "Why should I be angry or jealous?" Rachel fired back.

Right after she finished talking, Carson took advantage of her unpreparedness and took a step forward, leaning closer towards her.

Their faces were so close that if Rachel moved even a centimeter forward, her forehead would touch the tip of his nose.

She could smell the faint scent of cologne coming from his body. It was wildly different from Victor's musky, minty scent. In fact, Carson somehow smelled wild and funny, much like his personality.

"Because you have feelings for Victor," he said with certainty. "Shouldn't you get mad that there's another woman in his arms right now?"

Rachel could no longer stand the scent of Carson's cologne and stepped back. "I'm not mad."

"And you're not jealous either?"

"Hell no!"

Carson examined Rachel's face, hoping to find some sort of clue to her true feelings. However, he couldn't find any sign that she was lying. 'So, it's true. She really isn't angry or jealous.'

Frankly, he was surprised. He was about to say something, but he heard Alicia's voice and it made him stop.

"Victor, I thought... I really thought I was a goner! I thought I'd never see you, my grandpa, and my mom ever again!" Once more, Alicia held onto Victor tightly as tears streamed down her cheeks.

"The doctor will be here soon," he replied flatly. Indifference was written all over his face when he was about to put her down.

However, Alicia held onto him even tighter. "Please don't leave me alone, Victor! I'm really

scared."

Upon hearing her say that, Victor had no choice but to continue carrying her.

While Carson watched this scene unfold, he glanced back and forth between Alicia and Rachel. "Miss Schultz, people tell me that my hugs have a comforting feeling. If you're too scared to be alone right now, I wouldn't mind having you in my arms."

Alicia was crying bitterly moments ago, but when she heard that, she stopped.

Even Rachel fell silent. 'I underestimated you, Carson. You really have a way with words,' she thought.

"No, thanks," Alicia replied. Honestly, hearing Carson say that made her feel embarrassed, and her face started to blush.

"I really don't mind doing it. I'm more than strong enough to carry you. Besides, my friend, Victor, has never been good at comforting women. But me? I'm different. Frankly, I'm quite good at it. I promise you, Miss Schultz, one hug from me, and you'll forget the traumatic experience you've had just now."

"I..." Alicia wasn't sure how she was going to answer him.

'I can't tell him that I'm not really afraid, and that I just want to be in Victor's arms!

After all, I am the daughter of the Schultz family. Saying something like that will breed rumors, and it could ruin my name!' Alicia thought to herself.

At this point, her previously pale face had now turned red.

"Carson," Victor called out as if he was warning him.

Before long, Lukas arrived along with the family doctor. It wasn't until then that Alicia finally got off Victor's arms, and sat on the bench, so that the doctor could examine her eyes.

Lukas handed a bath towel to Victor, and served both of them some ginger soup.

"Miss Bennet, are you alright?" Lukas noticed that Rachel's trousers were also wet, so he asked with concern, "Do you need a change of clothes, ma'am? If you catch a cold..."

"What's gonna happen to her?" Victor interrupted in a cold, harsh voice.

Rachel's eyes dimmed. She knew that nothing good could ever happen with Victor around.

"What do you have to say for yourself, Rachel? Are you really that eager to get rid of everyone who could threaten your position?" With a single stride, Victor was already standing before Rachel. He looked down at her with piercing dark eyes. "Last time, you got rid of Alice, and now you're doing the same thing to Alicia. What's gonna happen next time, huh? Who are you planning to get rid of next?"

Rachel didn't respond.

"Mr. Sullivan, there must have been some sort of misunderstanding..." Lukas couldn't help but defend Rachel.

"Misunderstanding?" Victor sneered as if he heard a big joke. "Rachel, is there nothing too vile for you to do? I saw you push her down! I'm not blind! What do you have to say for

yourself this time?

You threw yourself into the traffic, effectively risking a baby's life, and now you've pushed someone into the lake? Is your heart made of stone or something? How could anyone be as wicked as you?"

Right after he finished speaking, he said to the servant next to him, "Hold her down."

# Chapter 122 Rachel, Get Down On Your Knees

Two servants immediately tried to control Rachel according to Victor's command, but she managed to dodge them. After all, compared to the professional bodyguards with great fighting skills, they weren't trained to do something like that. No matter how hard they tried, they couldn't even lay a hand on her.

"Rachel, don't forget that I still have your precious maid," Victor warned her.

Rachel paused and said through gritted teeth, "Victor, you promised me! You told me that you're not going to harm her as long as I sign your stupid agreement. You..."

"All I promised you is that I wouldn't send her to the Crown Club. I never promised you that I wouldn't harm her," he replied with a cold glare.

Upon hearing him say that, Rachel clenched her fists and stopped running.

The servants quickly held her down when she stopped.

A murderous gaze was written all over Victor's eyes when he said to her, "Rachel, get down on your knees."

As soon as he finished his words, everyone present was shocked. They never imagined that he would tell Rachel to kneel down in front of all these people.

"Mr. Sullivan, this isn't..." Lukas wanted to talk Victor out of it because Rachel was pregnant with Victor's child. No matter how much he hated her, she was still the baby's mother, and that could never change.

'If she were to kneel in public at this very moment, word would quickly spread like wildfire. Once the people find out about this, both she and her baby would be humiliated. Even the Sullivan family's name would be stained!'

Before Lukas could intercede for her, Victor cast a cold glance at him. "Anyone who dares to speak for this vile woman will be fired; effective immediately!"

Silence befell them. Despite the cold autumn breeze sweeping across the lake and seeping into their skins, all the servants present were breaking into cold sweat; none dared to utter a word.

However, Lukas still wanted to defend Rachel. He once promised old Mrs. Sullivan that he would take care of Victor, and he just couldn't watch him make this gigantic mistake. 'If word of this gets out, it would ruin Mr. Sullivan and the Sullivan family!' he thought to himself.

"Lukas." Rachel noticed that Lukas was about to defend her, so she smiled at him, just in time to stop him.

He looked back at her and uttered, "Miss Bennet."

A faint smile appeared on Rachel's face as the wind blew by. A few strands of her hair fluttered along with the wind, covering her forehead and her starry eyes.



She shook her head at Lukas. "Thank you," she said from the bottom of her heart.

Lukas let out a sigh.

He really didn't believe that Rachel would push Alicia into the lake. After all the time he spent with her, he got to know her a lot better, and he was certain Rachel wasn't that kind of person. 'In the past, even though she had indeed done so many ridiculous things, she had never done anything that could harm anyone. Moreover, Miss Bennet had changed a lot after all these days,' Lukas thought. ①

'But sadly, Mr. Sullivan's prejudice against her is so deep that he couldn't see that she had changed for the better.'

"Rachel, you're really good at your devilish tricks. Up until now, you're still trying to play the innocent one; that' you've even won Lukas' sympathy," Victor remarked. "You're so filled with lies that I sometimes wonder if you've fallen for your own lies as well. Right now, you must feel like I'm the one who's wronged you, correct?"

Rachel raised her head to look into his eyes. After a few moments, she suddenly burst into laughter.

Victor was surprised by her reaction. "Why are you laughing?"

"I used to think that I was blind to marry a man like you, but now that I think about it, I can see that we were actually quite a match," Rachel replied. "You're just as blind and as stupid as I once was!"

All of a sudden, the air around them became much colder that it was during a wintry day in December. Perhaps due to fear, everyone present shivered when a breeze blew by once more.

"What are you waiting for?" Victor ordered sternly.

After hearing him say that, the two servants came back to their senses and exerted more strength to push Rachel's shoulders down. Just when she was on the brink of kneeling down, someone grabbed her arm and held her up.

Rachel looked at the hand in astonishment. He managed to pull her up with such great strength. She could see the bulging veins on the back of his arm. And when she saw the watch on his wrist, she realized who was helping her.

That dark blue watch was from Harry Winston's Midnight Collection, inlaid with thirty 64 brilliant-cut diamonds, showcasing the amazing artistry of gem-setting akin to dancing snowflakes.

Only Carson would like something that high-key and fancy.

"What are you doing, Carson? Do you want to kneel in her place?" Although Victor was surprised to see Carson intervening in this matter, he didn't display any change in his emotions.

Upon hearing Victor speak, Carson loosened his grip at once.

Rachel was caught-off guard, and the servants were still pressing her down, and it caused her to kneel down all of a sudden.

Only one of her knees hit the floor, but it was so quick and hard that it made a loud thud.

Rachel put her hands on the floor and bit her lower lip. The pain from her knee quickly spread throughout her body, causing her to wail like a banshee.

"Miss Bennet!" Lukas hurried to her side, worried about her well-being.

Carson awkwardly touched his nose. "Sorry, I didn't mean for that to happen. I forgot to warn you first."

Rachel was speechless.

Victor's eyes darkened like pits. When he saw her fall to her knees like that, he took a half step, instinctively reaching out to grab her arm. But the moment he moved, he felt a resistance.

Alicia was tugging on his sleeve, and attempting to stop him.

It was only then that he was pulled back to reality. When he realized what he almost did, his eyes grew colder.

Seeing that Rachel wasn't saying a word, Carson helped her up and asked, "Do you need a doctor to have a look at your knee?"

"No, it's fine." Rachel pulled her arm back from him and said calmly, "Thanks."

"Don't get me wrong. I didn't mean to help you, so you have no reason to thank me," Carson replied bluntly.

Rachel once again fell silent.

Upon noticing Victor's icy gaze, Carson cleared his throat and explained, "I just have a proposal. Since the perpetrator and the victim are both present, why don't we listen to their stories first? I'm interested in what Alicia has to say."

Afterwards, an ambiguous smile appeared on his face as he looked at Alicia. He noticed that a worried look swept over her face the minute he made his suggestion. "Miss Schultz, could you please narrate how the 'crime' happened?"

Moments ago, he happened to see an unnatural expression flashing across her face when she heard Victor say that Rachel pushed her into the lake.

Carson wasn't sure why she had that look on her face, but he enjoyed watching the fun as long as he himself didn't get involved. The more things escalated, the more exciting it was for him.

With knitted eyebrows, Victor decided not to object.

Rachel frowned, glancing sideways at Carson. 'What the hell is wrong with this guy? I really don't understand what he's trying to do.'

Noticing her gaze, he looked back at her and raised an eyebrow. "Miss Bennet, have you suddenly come to realize that I am much more handsome than Victor? If you keep staring at me like that, you're going to make me blush."

Rachel really had no idea how to talk to this man.

'The Scott family is known for its strictness and conformity to rules and tradition. How in the world did Carson end up like this?'

Rachel quickly looked away and directed her gaze towards Alicia. In fact, she also wanted to know how Alicia would fabricate this story.

"I..." Suddenly, everyone's eyes were all on Alicia. She averted her gaze from them, loosened her grip on Victor's sleeve, and held the bath towel wrapped around her body. "I don't remember."

# Chapter 123 Throw The Handle After The Blade

Alicia's voice became lower and lower with every word she uttered. But even so, everyone heard her clearly.

All she said was that she didn't remember, and she thought it was a good excuse. She neither admitted to anything, nor denied that Rachel pushed her into the lake. Rachel, on the other hand, just smiled.

Alicia raised her head, and met Rachel's gaze. Her heart jolted upon seeing the look in Rachel's eyes, and she felt even guiltier. At once, she averted her gaze from Rachel, not daring to look at the woman again.

"Oh, you don't remember?" A playful grin was plastered on Carson's lips when he reached the end of his sentence as he looked into her eyes.

In a soft voice, Alicia replied, "It all happened so fast that I didn't have the time to remember how it happened." As she spoke, she turned to Victor with tearful eyes. "Victor, just... just let it go. I'm fine now anyway."

Victor's eyes dimmed, but he didn't respond.

Rachel withdrew her gaze from Alicia. She lowered her head, pondering for a moment. It was hard to figure out what she was thinking.

Upon noticing her silence, Carson chimed in. "Miss Bennet, aren't you going to defend yourself?"

"Why should I?" Rachel stared back at him.

Carson fell silent. Frankly, he had no idea how to answer that question.

'This isn't fun! No matter how hard I try to provoke Rachel, she just doesn't care.'

As Victor watched them interact, a frown formed on his face.

"Since Miss Schultz has decided to let this go, I'll let this one slide for her sake, but you have to apologize to her right now," he said. "Fine,"

Rachel replied without hesitation. To everyone's surprise, she agreed so readily!

Alicia looked at Rachel in astonishment. Before she could utter a word, she was violently pulled towards the steps near the lake, leaving her no chance to struggle or resist.

Her face quickly turned ghastly pale as she tried to steady herself. "Rachel, what the hell are you trying to do?"

Alicia exerted every ounce of strength in her body, but Rachel was far stronger than she was. Not only could she not break free from Rachel's grasp, her wrist also turned red.

Victor's eyes glinted as he strode forward and gritted his teeth. "Rachel!"

"Victor, you'd best stay the hell away from me!" Rachel warned him. "I'm crazy, aren't I? Not even I could tell what I'll do next!"

Victor stopped dead in his tracks; his face turned grim.

"Interesting..." Carson remarked. He crossed his arms and leaned against the pillar, enjoying the show.

Alicia turned to the lake behind her and remembered how she almost drowned. She couldn't help but shiver in fear. "Rachel, let me go! I said let me go this instant!"

Rachel scoffed at her and said, "Alicia, do you know what I hate the most in the world?"

Alicia fell silent for a moment before she asked, "What is it?" The two of them were standing on the edge of the stairs. If Rachel were to let go and push her with the slightest amount of strength, Alicia would fall into the lake. With that in mind, Alicia trembled in fear.

"I hate being used as a scapegoat."

"I... I never did anything like that!" Alicia's eyes were laden with guilt and terror. "There's no way I can tell the truth now! I lied earlier because I wasn't thinking straight. If I were to confess, what would Victor think of me?"

Besides, once I tell the truth, he would begin to have doubts of how I found out about Rachel's pregnancy, and the car accident.

No matter what, I cannot tell him the truth!"

Alicia looked at the lake behind her. She was so agitated that her eyes welled up with tears.

"Rachel, we can talk about this, okay? Please..."

"You may not know me that well, but if I have to debase myself and apologize, it should be for something that I really did," Rachel said with creased brows.

"No!"

Before Alicia could even finish talking, Rachel suddenly let go of her, and gently pushed her shoulder.

Plop!

Seconds later, Alicia fell into the lake again.

The water splashed onto Rachel's face, but she didn't even blink.

And once again, Alicia was struggling to get out of the water. "Help! Help me!"

Lukas immediately shouted at the servants, "Why are you all still standing around? Go save her!"

The servants finally recovered from the shock and jumped into the lake one after the other to save Alicia. Not long after, she was dragged ashore.

Her face was deathly pale. She covered her chest and continuously coughed. Her eyes were bloodshot, and there were even water plants entangled with her hair. Right now, she didn't look like the elegant refined Schultz family's daughter at all.

Rachel stepped forward, crouched beside her, and reached her hand out.

Terrified of Rachel, Alicia screamed, "Rachel, no! What else are you gonna do to me?"

Rachel turned a deaf ear to her pleas. She took the water plants off her head, and threw them

back into the lake. "Don't be so nervous. Everyone should take responsibility for what they've done, right? And since I've done what I was accused of now, I should apologize."

Alicia gnashed her teeth as she trembled all over. She had no idea if it was because of anger or the fact that she was feeling cold.

"Miss Schultz, I'm so sorry for pushing you into the lake by accident. I really am sorry," Rachel apologized nonchalantly.

Alicia's face turned pale, but she had no idea how to vent her anger.

"Haha!"

All of a sudden, they heard someone laughing. Rachel turned to look at the laughing man, and just as she had expected, it was Carson.

He scratched his nose and chuckled. "Why have I never found you this interesting before, Miss Bennet?"

In the past, whenever Rachel was involved in something like this, she would either just suck it up or curse incessantly.

But now, she was smarter. She knew how to reciprocate other people's animosity towards her. It somehow seemed like her cunning nature was drilled into her bones. In short, she wouldn't stand to be on the losing end of the stick. Even if she must suffer, she would take everyone down with her and make them suffer even worse.

Carson truly found this new Rachel interesting.

She then stared at him in silence before saying, "I guess birds of the same feather do flock together," she remarked casually.

It took Carson a while to understand what Rachel meant.

'Birds of the same feather flock together, huh?

Who's the bird? Or should I say, who's the person?' Carson thought to himself.

Naturally, she was referring to Victor. Just a few minutes ago, Rachel said that he was blind and stupid.

Carson didn't know what to say at this point. Rachel had become truly cunning.

"Lukas!" Victor's face turned grim. Everyone who saw the look on his face felt that a storm was coming.

"Mr. Sullivan..." Lukas was very familiar with that look. 'Mr. Sullivan is probably furious now.'

Victor cast Rachel a cold glance and said, "From now on, never let this woman step out of her room! Anyone who dares to let her out will be exiled from this city. If she tries to escape, just break her legs!"

Lukas was horrified by his words.

'He's asking us to break her legs?'

"I'd like to see how arrogant you can be with broken legs, Rachel!" Victor said as he strode forward to stare down at her.

"Oh, but don't worry. We have professional doctors in the house. Even if your legs do get broken, the baby will be taken care of."

"Victor, you bastard!" Rachel glared back at him. Her eyes were brimming with anger, and she made no attempt to hide her hatred for Victor.

When he looked into her eyes, he could see just how much she hated him. All of a sudden, it made him feel like his heart was being torn apart.

# Chapter 124 Clues Of Abby's Whereabouts

For the next three days, Rachel did not leave her room.

It seemed that this time, Victor really meant what he said. He even reassigned his personal bodyguards to the Sue Garden. And those men stood guard at Rachel's door 24 hours a day.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

From outside her door, Lukas said, "Miss Bennet, I've brought you some food."

Rachel blinked to alleviate the soreness of her eyes, caused by staring at the ceiling for too long, and shouted, "I'm not hungry, Lukas!"

"Ma'am, are you okay in there?" Lukas asked, feeling a bit worried. "Are you feeling any discomfort? Would you like me to call you a doctor?"

"No, it's okay. I'm fine." Having said that, she closed her eyes to relieve the dryness of her eyes. All sorts of thoughts raced through her mind.

Lukas said something to her from outside the door, but Rachel didn't hear him clearly. She just gave him a vague answer, and then it became quiet again.

All of a sudden, she heard her phone buzzing on the bedside table.

Slowly, she opened her eyes and reached for her phone. On the screen, she saw a message from an unknown number.

Nothing else was written on the message other than a dot.

This dot was her secret communication method with Quintin.

Rachel sat upright, unlocked her phone, and opened her browser. Afterwards, she quickly input a series of letters on the search bar, and the page soon changed.

Q: Hey boss, why haven't you been online lately?

King of Hearts: Something happened. What's up? Have you found any clues about the person I asked you to investigate?

Q: Actually, I have a question. Is this person even real? Who on earth is she? Is she important or something? I've done everything I can, and hacked into all sources of information I can hack, but I still couldn't find any clues about her.

Quintin had promised Rachel that he would find Abby's whereabouts, but after nearly a month of searching, he still hadn't found the slightest clues. He wondered if Abby was just a figment of Rachel's imagination. 'Maybe this Abby doesn't really exist?' Quintin said to himself.

'After all, the boss did spend three years in prison. Perhaps she had developed some sort of mental problem in there?

But I can't ask her that! She's going to kill me if she even finds out that I have such speculations about her!'



At this time, Rachel's face turned grim. If she didn't know that Abby was definitely in Victor's hands, she might think along the same lines as Quintin. She had searched every possible place Abby could've been locked up, but it led to no avail. Q: Boss, if this Abby really exists, she couldn't just disappear. You need to think about this carefully. Is there any other place she might go? Somewhere that you would never think she could go? I mean, even if she's dead, you'd still be able to find her body, right?

'I've been to the Bennet family's mansion, the Sullivan Group, the Sue Garden, the Sullivan family's mansion, the Crown Club, and I've even ran a background check on Carson! But I still can't find Abby anywhere,' Rachel thought to herself.

But there was one thing she was certain of, and that was the fact that Abby was still alive.

'How could there be no trace of Abby left if she's still alive?'

As Rachel stared at the message Quintin had sent her, something occurred to her. "Quintin, let me ask you a question. Where would you go if you want to erase any trace that you exist? To be precise, it should be somewhere that the detection system couldn't track."

Quintin was stunned when he read her message.

The detection system that she mentioned were created by them. It was based on the Skynet system, but much more improved. No matter where a certain person was, whether in the wilderness or at home, as long they show any sign of activity, the system would be able to track them somehow.

Thus, if someone wanted to avoid the detection of the system, there was only one way to do so.

Quintin's eyes lit up when he figured out the answer.

Using the keyboard, he typed, "There's only one place that could avoid the detection system."

While he was typing those words, he could feel his arms trembling.

He couldn't tell whether it was because of excitement or fear. Q: It's in prison.

King of Hearts: It's in prison.

Both of them sent the same message at the same time.

Quintin took a deep breath as he stared at those words on the screen. "Boss, who is this Abby? And who hid her? If she was really hidden inside a prison, whoever did so must've learnt it from you!"

'Learnt it from me?'

Rachel couldn't help but smile sardonically at herself when she read those words. She remembered the time when Andy was bragging in front of Abby about the legend of King of Hearts.

He told her of how King of Hearts hid a living person to the point that nobody could find that person within an entire year.

Rachel had indeed succeeded in doing that, but why was it a legend? It was because nobody ever figured out where King of Hearts had hidden that certain person.

But Quintin knew how she did it.

Back then, King of Hearts hid the person within a faraway prison.

Never did Rachel imagine that someone would emulate her methods.

King of Hearts: Check all the prisons within Apliaria, and all the nearby cities as soon as possible. If she's really hidden within a prison, we can definitely find her.

Once Quintin received the order, he immediately replied, "Consider it done, boss!" Afterwards, the two of them continued to chat for a while.

As usual, they complained about a certain shameless couple, and Quintin reported the couple's recent situation to Rachel.

About half an hour later, Rachel logged off the forum and touched her abdomen. Her previously gloomy mood had now dissipated when she felt connected to her baby. "Little one, we'll be able to leave this wretched place soon." 1

Now that she had a clue of Abby's whereabouts, it was time for her to prepare for her next plan of action.

Inside the CEO's office of Sullivan Group.

The window was covered with a thick curtain, shrouding the office in darkness. It was hard to tell whether it was night or day inside the office.

Ivan had been knocking at the door for a few minutes, but there was no response. He glanced at his wristwatch and felt that something strange was going on.

'He should still be in his office right now.'

Once more, he knocked on the door.

"Mr. Sullivan, it's me, Ivan," he said. However, silence was the only response he got.

Since it was almost time for Victor to have a meeting with a business partner, Ivan hesitantly opened the door. As soon as he entered, he was surprised to see that the room was shrouded in utter darkness.

He stood in place for a moment until his eyes adjusted to the darkness. A few seconds later, he noticed someone lying on the sofa.

The elegant black leather sofa wasn't that small, but the man's figure dwarfed the sofa's size. He looked a bit uneasy lying on it. His suit jacket was still on the executive chair, and the white shirt he wore highlighted his muscular figure. The first two buttons were undone, revealing his sexy collarbone.

His right arm was covering his eyes, as if it was the only way he could sleep comfortably.

As Ivan looked at the man, he was lost in thought. 'It's a rare sight to see Mr. Sullivan shut all his blinders and trap himself in such a dark environment. What's going on with him?'

"What is it?" Victor asked abruptly, interrupting Ivan's thoughts.

Now that Victor had awakened, he sat upright and glanced at Ivan.

"Sir, it's almost twelve noon. There's only half an hour left before your lunch meeting with

Mr. Flecher of the Foyal Group," said Ivan.

"Okay, get the car ready." As soon as Victor finished speaking, the curtains slowly pulled up. The dazzling sunshine peered through the windows, falling onto his shoulder, and dispersing the coldness from his body.

# Chapter 125 Someone To Redeem You

The shiny black Maybach pulled to a steady stop outside the Crown Club.

The doorman just about fell over himself to open the car door for Victor. Since his last visit here, in which he'd revealed his identity, the entire staff of the club had memorized his license plate. They were so terrified of accidentally neglecting him that they wanted to know he had arrived before he even set foot in the door.

"Mr. Sullivan," the manager greeted him with a respectful bow. He'd received word of him coming that morning and had prepared himself.

Victor didn't immediately get out the car. He took his time fastening the cuffs and putting on his jacket. When he did step out the car, he was silent and brooding. He strode into the club, closely followed by Ivan and the manager.

As they approached the elevator, the manager nodded minutely to one of the employees, signaling them to call the elevator. The employee pressed one of the buttons and then hurried away. "Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Flecher from Foyal Group is waiting for you" the manager said. Victor didn't immediately respond.

Silence fell around the three men and then finally, the elevator arrived.

Only then did Victor nod to what the manager had said and stepped in. The manager pushed a button that took them straight to the western restaurant on the third floor.

They stepped out the elevator and were shown towards a private room by one of the waiters. The waiter stood aside respectfully and pushed the door to the room open for them.

The sounds of voices rose as soon as the door was opened. Victor could hear the clear sounds of conversation. Wanting to know more, he stepped quietly into the room.

"Are you tired? If you are, I'm sure I could ask Garry to arrange a guest room for you. There are plenty upstairs. You could go and take a nap while I attend to business, and I could call you when I'm finished, okay?" the man said in concern to the woman sitting beside him.

"Alright, that sounds nice. Thank you. I must admit, I am feeling a little tired. And anyway, what use am I in your business discussion?" the woman said with a yawn. "I'll have you know it's your fault I'm tired. I would have had a decent rest if it wasn't for you dragging me out so early in the morning to go shopping for baby goods. I was sleeping so soundly."

"I guess I got a little overexcited when I heard our baby's heartbeat... And I mean, we have to get things sorted out at some stage." The man smiled at the woman with all the love and affection in the world.

"I'm only three months along. I've still got another six to go. There is no reason to rush; we still have plenty of time. Also, don't you think we bought way too many clothes? Babies grow fast you know. Before you know it, the little one is going to outgrow everything. I don't even think our baby is going to fit into half of the things we've bought," the woman complained

with a pout.

The man reached out and gently took hold of the woman's shoulder. He gave her a comforting squeeze, then leaned over and kissed her on the forehead. "I'll admit, it was probably a bit of an oversight on my part. Just go take a nap, okay?"

The woman nodded and slowly started getting to her feet. The man immediately sprung up and helped her.

The woman clicked her tongue mockingly at the man. "Really now. I'm only three months pregnant, I'm sure I can stand on my own. You don't need to help me."

"I'm just being cautious. One can never be too careful when it comes to one's pregnant wife and baby." Mr. Flecher turned around as he finished speaking. He wanted to give his secretary, Garry, a list of instructions on what to do for his wife, but instead, saw Victor and Ivan standing at the door. His eyebrows rose in surprise.

"Mr. Sullivan," the man, Elian Flecher, said, quickly masking his surprise with good manners. The woman turned at the sound of his name and smiled in greeting. "Mr. Sullivan."

Victor glanced at the woman and nodded in acknowledgement.

"I'm going to take a nap," the woman said to Elian in a low voice. "You get on with your work, okay?"

"Garry, take good care of her," Elian said.

Garry gave a single nod, then escorted Mrs. Flecher out the room. Victor had mostly ignored the exchange and sat down. He noticed a couple of bags on the floor near Elian's feet, and sticking out the top he could see the labels of famous baby products.

Elian followed Victor's gaze down to the bags, then looked up at him and said, "My wife and I went to the hospital this morning for her prenatal checkup. On our way here, we saw a shop selling baby products, so we stopped and bought some."

"I thought you said you didn't want children," Victor said in the lilting voice.

Elian and Victor were old friends. They'd met in university when the two of them had been studying abroad. They knew each other well; well enough to know each other's family history. In fact, Elian and Victor shared much the same family background. Just like Victor, Elian was an illegitimate child and was not welcomed by his family.

But of course, the two of them also had their differences.

One of the most prominent of these differences were their means of obtaining their positions of power. While Victor had taken his position as head of the Sullivan Group by besting his enemies, Elian had inherited Foyal Group.

While he was a bastard child and technically unwelcome in the family, he was also the only child of the Flecher family.

During a drunken night out during their university days, Elian had once said to Victor, "Bro, if I ever get married, I swear I'm never having children."

Later, when Elian's grandfather had fallen seriously ill, he'd left his studies to return home

and take over the family business.

That was the last they had seen of each other, until now. Victor still remembered Elian in university when he had said he wanted nothing to do with children... And now here he was, surrounded by baby products, excited beyond belief for the birth of his baby.

Victor didn't know what could have happened that could have changed Elian's mind.

The conversation he'd overheard between Elian and his wife had made his heart ache in a way he couldn't describe. Unbidden, Rachel's eyes had appeared in his mind.

And they were full of hatred for him. 2

"I used to think that anyone born into this family was destined for an arranged marriage. I always believed that if there was no love between two people, there could be no happiness. And a child certainly wouldn't change that. Not to mention that I'm a Flecher. The men in my family have a reputation for being absolutely despicable. I didn't want to follow in my father's footsteps. I didn't want to father a bastard child with just some mistress," Elian said. "I didn't want a child to live the life I had to."

Victor leaned forward and picked up his glass of red wine. He sipped it elegantly as he asked, "And now?"

"Now?" A small smile appeared on Elian's face at the thought of his wife. "Now I believe in something I didn't before."

"And... That is?" Victor raised an eyebrow in question.

"That there is always someone out there who can redeem you," Elian said with a warm smile. "My wife and I married with no emotional attachment to each other. We felt nothing for each other. It was just like living with another person. Even after we were married, I didn't touch her. Not for an entire year. Until one day when I got drunk..."

Elian trailed off and averted his eyes. While he didn't say it explicitly, it was obvious that the two of them had shared a night together.

"Well, to say the least, she got pregnant. At first, she wanted to have the baby in secret without telling me anything. Obviously, I found out. It gave me something to think about; and trust me, I thought long and hard about it. There was just something about seeing such a refined, delicate lady throwing up, unable to eat anything, because of my child. She never complained or blamed the child. She just bore it with grace and dignity. I think the resentment I held towards the arranged marriage softened. I decided I wanted to at least try and accept the marriage, and the child."

Victor's hand tightened on the wine glass. He narrowed his eyes as his thoughts went wild, but he managed to keep his emotions off his face as he listened to Elian.

"I pushed past those prejudices I had about arranged marriages and started trying when it came to the relationship. I felt that I'd started to change my views, and I realized that I was starting to like the woman I'd married. Now... Now I think this baby might be a blessing. When I went with her to that prenatal checkup this morning and heard the baby's heartbeat..."

Something changed in me. Suddenly, I found myself looking forward to meeting my child."

Elian's wife and child were constantly on his mind. He spoke about them at every given opportunity.

While Elian spoke, Victor kept glancing down at the bags at his feet.

Victor and Elian didn't eat much during their meeting, but they did drink half a bottle of red wine between them.

They said their goodbyes later, and Victor returned to the Maybach waiting outside for him. He got in and stared out the window as the car slowly pulled away from the club to head back to the Sullivan Group.

Victor relaxed in the backseat of the car. He rolled down the window to let in the cool autumn breeze. It was nice and refreshing after being inside.

He was silent for a while, until he suddenly sat forward and said, "Turn the car around. I want to go to the Sue Garden."

# Chapter 126 Endure Him

Ivan was quite surprised by Victor's request. He looked up at him in the rearview mirror and said, "Did you leave something there, Mr. Sullivan?"

"No." Victor's expression darkened at Ivan's question. "Cancel all my appointments for this afternoon as well," he said.

Ivan glanced down at the time on his phone. He pursed his lips in surprise. It was still early afternoon. On a Wednesday. A working day. Victor wanted to cancel his appointments on a work day.

He must have heard wrong. Surely Victor wouldn't want to cancel all his appointments for the day, just to go back to Sue Garden?

He looked up at Victor in the rearview mirror again. He just couldn't believe his ears. This was the first time in the two years he'd been working for Victor that something like this had happened.

"Yes, sir," Ivan answered in as neutral a tone as possible, considering how excited and surprised he was.

With all the appointments for the day cancelled, that meant Ivan also had the rest of the day off. How could he not be excited about that?

Victor sat quietly in the backseat, tapping his fingers rhythmically against his thigh. His eyes were narrowed and he kept his gaze studiously out the window.

The drive to Sue Garden was only an hour long, and soon, the Maybach pulled up in the open space near the front garden.

Today was the first time he'd come here at this time.

Lukas was just coming down from Rachel's room with a pile of plates. He was quite surprised when he saw Victor walking into the building. "Victor?" he said, barely managing to contain his surprise.

Victor nodded in greeting. His eyes darted to the plates Lukas was carrying. The corners of his mouth tipped down in a frown at the sight of them.

It wasn't because there were many plates, but because most of the food on them seemed untouched. It looked like Rachel had just taken a few bites out of them.

Lukas looked from Victor down at the plates. "Miss Bennet told me to bring the food up to her later. She didn't feel like eating now," he explained.

"Has she tried to escape?" Victor asked. He'd been sleeping at the company since that day. He didn't want to come back here, just so she could look at him with so much hate... He would never forget that look...

And he didn't ever want to see it again.

It was the first time in years that he was avoiding a situation instead of facing it head on.



"No. Miss Bennet has been staying obediently in her room for the past three days," Lukas replied.

Victor gritted his jaw and narrowed his eyes. For some reason, that thought put him more on edge than it should. He started towards the stairs but then stopped and turned to Lukas.

"Tell her to come downstairs."

At first, Lukas froze in surprise. Then he hurried to do as he'd been told. He was scared that if he hung around for too long Victor would suddenly change his mind.

Upstairs, Rachel was in her room writing in a notebook. For now, she was completely oblivious to Victor's impromptu visit.

So far in the book she'd compiled a short list:

1. Bennet Group's shares.
2. Wallace, Tara.
3. Abby.
- 4.

The tip of her pen hovered near the number for a long while. She almost seemed to have gone into some type of trance. The sudden knock on the door brought her back to reality.

"Miss Bennet, Mr. Sullivan is here," Lukas called through the door.

Rachel looked down at her hand hovering above the paper and noticed that the ink had already dried.

The list of things she'd written down was everything she needed to look into and sort out before she left. However, it was going to be difficult to accomplish anything while she was locked in this room all the time.

She had briefly entertained the thought of jumping off the balcony. It really wasn't that big of a jump; two floors would be quite easy for her.

But she wouldn't risk something like that now, not while she was pregnant. She had to think about her baby as well. Even if she did jump though, she would still have to evade the servants before she could escape Sue Garden. If she was caught, her next escape attempt would be much harder.

The safest, though not the easiest way out, was to get Victor to change his mind.

She had to keep his suspicions off her, at least until Abby was free.

Rachel's eyes unfocused on the paper as her mind whirled with all these thoughts. She had to come up with a plan. And the best one at the moment was not to quarrel with Victor, for now.

If she could just tolerate him for these few days, she was sure she could come up with a better plan. There would be plenty of time for revenge later.

"Miss Bennet?" Lukas called again. He'd been waiting for long enough for a response to become concerned.

"Yes, I'm here,"

Rachel said as she tore the paper out the notebook and ripped it to pieces. She scrunched all the shreds into a ball and threw it in the trash can. Then she went and opened the door. "Yes, Lukas?"

"Miss Bennet, Mr. Sullivan wants to see you downstairs," Lukas said.

What a coincidence; that was exactly what she wanted.

"Just let me change my clothes," Rachel said with a smile.

Lukas waited outside her bedroom door while she changed her clothes, then he followed her downstairs. Just before she stepped into the living room, Lukas suddenly stopped her.

"Miss Bennet, wait!"

Rachel turned to look at him.

Lukas felt his cheeks warm slightly. He hesitated before he said slowly, "I just wanted to give you a bit of advice, Miss Bennet. Don't be as stubborn with Mr. Sullivan as you were before. Just... Talk to him reasonably and calmly. Maybe he will change his mind and let you out."

"I... Okay."

"I know Mr. Sullivan sometimes doesn't care about other's feelings, but he is a reasonable man. Just talk to him."

Reasonable?

Rachel nearly burst out laughing at this. If Mr. Sullivan was a reasonable man, then perhaps the sun would start rising in the west and setting in the east. That was how preposterous such a statement sounded.

She knew Lukas was only saying this for her own good. While she didn't agree with what he said, she didn't dispute his good intentions. She just gave a warm smile and said, "Don't worry, Lukas. I know. I'm not going to argue with him anymore." ①

She nodded at Lukas, then turned and walked into the living room.

Rachel saw Victor the moment she entered the room. He was sitting on the sofa with the ankle of one leg resting on the opposite knee. The position made his trouser legs pull up a little, and exposed his black socks. He had his usual noble, cold air about him. Almost like he was the prince of an ice castle.

Victor took one look at her and his expression darkened. "Go and change your clothes," he said when he saw her outfit.

Rachel was speechless. She was so surprised she couldn't speak for a moment.

Change her clothes?

She looked at herself to see what was so wrong with what she was wearing. But she just couldn't understand. It was a casual dress; there was nothing unseemly or strange about it. She gritted her teeth in irritation. Why was her dress offending him?

Her immediate reaction was to argue with him and defend her point of view. But as she

raised her chin in defiance, she saw Lukas wink at her out the corner of her eye. He was reminding her not to cause a scene. She closed her eyes, took a deep breath and tried to calm herself.

'Let it go. Don't get angry.

Anger is the devil's work. Let it go, and be the bigger person.'

She just had to put up with him for a little longer.

In a calm voice she said, "Alright, just give me a moment to change."

She left the living room and went back up to her room.

Victor noticed her sudden change in attitude. He noticed how she had been about to get angry, but had then somehow suppressed it. He narrowed his eyes at the doorway after she'd walked out.

Rachel didn't take long to change. In no time at all, she was back downstairs in a different outfit.

"Change," Victor said, after hardly sparing her a glance.

Rachel wanted to argue, but she just said, "Okay." 'Just a little while longer,' she thought to herself.

Victor made her change her outfit several more times. Each time she went upstairs, she got more and more impatient and irritated. She had promised Lukas she wouldn't argue with Victor, but she hadn't expected him to test her patience so soon.

It made her wonder if he was doing this on purpose.

When she came downstairs again and Victor told her to change without even looking at her, her temper finally broke. "Are you doing this on purpose?" she snapped.

She felt two pairs of eyes land on her at the same time.

Victor just gazed at her expressionlessly and said nothing.

The other set of eyes belonged to Lukas. He was standing behind the sofa, sighing and touching his forehead after what she'd said.

Rachel immediately calmed herself down. She sat elegantly down on the sofa and faced Victor. "You keep telling me to change my clothes, but you never tell me what I must change into. So tell me, what do you want me to wear? I know the doctor told me to exercise more, but I'm pregnant. And all this walking back and forth is starting to make me tired. I don't mind going to change, but you need to tell me what you want me to wear first."

Victor stared at her and said nothing.

Rachel couldn't tell whether he was angry or not, but before she got the chance, Victor stood up and walked out.

Rachel stared after him, watching him until he'd walked out the room. Then he came back a few moments later and stopped in the doorway. "You asked me to tell you what to wear. Aren't you coming?"

Rachel raised her eyebrows and blinked in response. What on earth was he up to now?

Lukas cleared his throat when Rachel didn't move, and said in a low voice, "Miss Bennet, Mr. Sullivan is waiting for you."

"Oh," Rachel said and shook her head. She quickly returned to her senses and stood up to follow Victor.

People often said that a woman's heart was complicated, but it now seemed that the saying was true for a man as well. 2

# Chapter 127 Baby Products Store

Victor walked into the cloakroom, and Rachel followed suit.

While he was looking at the clothes in display, Rachel sat on the small sofa, gently massaging her calves. Perhaps her legs had grown sore from coming up and down the stairs several times over.

'I wonder if Quintin is done with the investigation,' she thought to herself.

Rachel's head was downcast while she was pondering over something when a shadow fell over her.

Afterwards, she heard him say, "Put it on."

She instantly raised her head and saw the clothes in Victor's hand.

Rachel fell silent for a moment, frowning at the expressionless man, and wondering if she could refuse to wear those tacky clothes.

Just as she was debating on whether to wear it or not, Victor tossed the clothes onto her and said, "Change into those clothes and meet me downstairs in five minutes."

With that, he left the room, and closed the door behind him.

Rachel stared at the clothes in her arms, clearly displeased. 'Men's taste in clothes are seriously weird sometimes. Or maybe he's messing with me?'

Five minutes passed by in a blur.

Rachel did not dare to dilly-dally, fearing that if she were to be a second later, he would get upset and she would have to suffer his wrath.

Once she had changed into the clothes, she hurried out of the room, quickly passing by the mirror, and making sure not to look at herself. After leaving the cloakroom, she drew a deep breath before slowly making her way downstairs.

At this time, Lukas had been waiting for her at the stairs. The moment he laid eyes on Rachel, he was stupefied. The sound of his voice was laden with surprise. "Miss Bennet!"

"What?" she replied.

"Are you okay, ma'am?" Lukas asked with concern as he examined her face.

Rachel was silenced for a moment because of his question. "Not really," she answered.

"Umm..." Lukas was at a loss for words. He had no idea how to comment on Rachel's attire.

He had seen people donned in red and black clothing, or maybe red and green.

But this was the first time he had seen someone dressed in a black and green combination, and definitely not in a good way. Aside from that, it was a thick coat. If it weren't for the dazzling sun outside, Lukas would've thought it was winter already.

"Lukas, where's Victor?" Obviously, Rachel preferred not to discuss her outfit with anyone. She glanced around the living room and noticed that only the servants were there, and

Victor was nowhere to be found.

"Oh, right! Mr. Sullivan is waiting for you in the car," Lukas replied.

'In the car?' Rachel thought to herself.

'Is he taking me out?

Where is he taking me?'

Rachel turned to the door, and from that distance, she could see a dark brown Bentley driving into the front yard. The window of the car was half-opened and she could see the side of Victor's face.

She decided not to waste another second, and said goodbye to Lukas before walking out.

When the driver saw Rachel come out of the house, he got off the car, went around to the door of the back seat, and opened it for her.

As Rachel went down the steps, she paused before going into the car. The very moment she sat next to Victor, she could feel his icy, intimidating aura. Instinctively, her nerves tensed up.

Soon, the driver went back to his seat, started the engine, and drove out of the Sue Garden.

Rachel had no way of knowing why she didn't feel hot inside the car. She thought that maybe it was due to Victor's cold shoulder, though there were still beads of sweat on her forehead. The bodily temperature of pregnant women was usually a bit higher than that of ordinary people. They were more susceptible to warmer weathers instead of the colder ones. From the corner of her eyes, she could see that Victor was still the same as always; stone-cold and stoic. Seconds later, she adjusted her sitting position, and took off her coat.

But the second she removed it, Victor glared at her. "Put it back on."

Rachel was speechless. 'I thought he wasn't paying attention to me.'

She then glanced at his face, hesitating whether she should endure the heat and avoid a conflict. All of a sudden, the driver spoke, interrupting her thoughts.

"Miss Bennet, I highly recommend you put it on. The weather forecast this morning reported that the temperature will drop dramatically this afternoon." While he was talking, he glanced at the rearview mirror, wary of Victor's expression. Upon seeing that Victor showed no sign of displeasure, the driver continued, "Mr. Sullivan told you to wear it because he's worried you might catch a cold." 2

'It's going to be cold this afternoon, huh?'

She took a look outside the car. Ever since she got in, the window was raised a bit higher, but there was still a small gap left for ventilation. The wind poured into the car, disheveling her bangs. The second the wind touched her skin, she felt how cold and damp it was.

It would seem that the temperature was really going to drop soon.

Rachel averted her gaze from the window, and stared at the coat. After a moment of silence, she decided that it was best to put it on.

Throughout the rest of the journey, none of them spoke. Although it wasn't that tense inside

the car, it was still a bit awkward.

The Bentley smoothly drove across the highway for a while. Just as Rachel was starting to feel drowsy, the car finally stopped.

The driver opened the door of the backseat and said, "Miss Bennet, Mr. Sullivan, we've arrived."

"Are we going shopping?" Rachel looked around as soon as she got out of the car. They were in the most famous shopping mall in Apliaria. And if she remembered correctly, this place was owned by the Sullivan Group.

'Why did he take me to the mall?'

Rachel frowned, glancing at him subconsciously. She saw that he was already on his way to the mall entrance without hesitation.

'As always, he's doing things out of a whim,' she thought.

Minutes later, they both got out of the elevator.

At this point, Rachel could no longer suppress her curiosity.

She kept looking around and saw all kinds of shops, and yet she still couldn't figure out what they were doing here. "What exactly are we supposed to do here?" she asked.

"To buy baby products," Victor replied flatly.

Rachel fell silent for a second before she replied inquisitively, "What?" She stopped because she thought she had misheard him. "What did you just say?"

"Mr. Sullivan, Miss Bennet, welcome!" Suddenly, she heard a pleasant voice that drowned out her thoughts.

That was the moment Rachel realized that she had been pondering about what Victor wanted to do throughout their entire journey. She was so anxious and confused about it that she failed to notice that they were already standing at the entrance of a store.

On the wall beside the entrance, there was a huge LED neon sign.

Judging by the logo of a pacifier, this store was obviously selling baby products.

"Mr. Sullivan, all the new arrivals have been prepared. Do you want to go in and take a look at them?" the shop manager asked as he approached them.

About an hour ago, the senior managers of the shopping mall received a message that Victor was on his way to this mall. For a few minutes, the entire mall was on full alert. It appeared as though they were preparing for a war. The staff were all busy checking if they had done anything wrong.

As soon as the store owners heard about the news, they began to guess which store Victor would visit, and made early preparations in case he would drop by their respective stores. The manager of this store was no exception.

Victor nodded indifferently before walking in.

Rachel, on the other hand, was still at a loss for words.

Chapter 127 Baby + Road to Hell

'What the hell is going on? Has he gone crazy or something?'



## Chapter 128 Out Of Control

The moment Rachel stepped into the store, she was immediately overwhelmed by the sheer amount of baby products. There were so many different varieties, colors and shapes...

But there was one brand in particular that caught her eye. It was enough to make her forget about her whining from earlier and focus on the shopping experience. As she studied the different products, the ultrasound image of her baby at the prenatal check-up appeared in her mind.

The other shop manager inside had noticed Rachel the moment she'd walked in the door. Of course, this was partly due to Victor being there. She saw how Rachel was staring moon-eyed at everything and came up to her with a smile. "Miss Bennet, I can give you an introduction to all the different products, if you'd like?"

The baby products had been designed to be eye-catching to mothers. It was them that had to make the choice between the different brands, after all.

While the manager had no idea why Victor would need baby products, she was a smart enough businesswoman to know that, with Victor in her store, today was going to be profitable.

Rachel looked up into the shop manager's enthusiastic eyes and just couldn't say no.

The manager seemed only too delighted to help her. With never-ending optimism and energy, she introduced the different products to Rachel.

"This baby stroller in particular is one of our best sellers. Both the sales and the feedback on it have been phenomenal. You can detach the front armrest of this stroller. And just in case your little one likes to chew on things, the armrest is made from the latest anti-biting smooth foam material."

Rachel nodded along as she listened.

She could feel Victor's eyes on her as he watched from the back.

He wasn't interested in what the shop manager was saying, he was busy studying her coat. Usually, he found black and green designs lame, but on her it was somehow spectacular. The color and cut perfectly matched her elegant demeanor in a way that seemed to create her own unique style.

The shop manager kept showing Rachel product after product. While it looked like she was listening and paying careful attention, Victor knew she wasn't.

But then again, he hadn't been paying attention from the beginning. Now, he kept thinking back to what Carson had said to him a few days ago.

"I think there is a part of you that doesn't really believe that Rachel pushed Alicia into the lake that day," he had said. "I think you just have a deep-seated prejudice against her. That's why you chose to ignore the truth that was right in front of you."

Victor's eyes narrowed as he stared at Rachel.

Ever since the divorce and leading to Rachel's pregnancy, Victor had felt like his life was spiraling out of control. He didn't even seem to have a grasp on his own self-control; something he had always been so proud of. He had no idea why he felt this way, or why he couldn't pull himself together, but he had a feeling it wasn't a good thing.

He wanted to take his life back. He wanted to regain control over what was his.

But the more he tried to suppress his growing feelings, the worse it became, the harder it became to control.

When he and Elian had eaten together earlier that day, he had thought of nothing else but Rachel lying in the ultrasound room. He couldn't stop hearing her asking the doctor about the baby's health, and how the baby's heartbeat sounded. It had nearly been enough to make him want to put his own prejudices aside.

"Mr. Sullivan, what do you think?" The manager's question broke him out of his thoughts.

Victor looked down at Rachel, only to find she was looking up at him expectantly, waiting for him to answer. She looked different today. The expression on her face was different. It wasn't that harsh, hostile look he had come to expect from her. She looked quiet, and obedient now.

By the way she kept glancing towards the toy area, Victor could tell she was much more interested in the dolls than she was in the stroller.

As he swallowed, his Adam's apple bobbed almost nervously in his throat. "We'll take it," he said coolly.

"Wonderful!" the shop manager said with an excited clap of her hands. She turned to one of her assistants and asked them to package it.

Rachel was quite surprised by his statement. She looked up at him questioningly, trying to catch his gaze, but he ignored her.

The shop manager, on the other hand, was absolutely delighted. This was a great start to what she had no doubt was going to be a spending spree. She kept showing products to them, and kept looking up at Victor to ask his opinion. With her natural charm and smart business strategy, she knew how to sell just about anything. If Rachel said nothing, Victor would buy whatever it was.

The shopping experience lasted around three hours. The shop manager was energetic and enthusiastic the entire time, never once giving any indication that she was getting tired or thirsty from all the talking. She still walked with a spring in her step as if she hadn't been standing for quite some time already. Rachel listened as attentively as she could. To her, the joy of the shopping experience had disappeared long ago, and it was all starting to feel like a school lecture again.

By the time they finally finished their shopping and left the store, it was almost dusk.

Then the managers personally saw them out the shop and out the mall. The female manager looked up at the sky when she realized how time had gotten away from them. At

first, she marveled at the way the setting sun painted the clouds in hues of orange and red, and then she sighed. "Ah... Look at the evening glow!"

'The evening glow?'

Rachel looked up at the sky.

She saw how the fading red light dyed the clouds to look like flames, and the spacious square outside the mall where they were standing provided a stunning view.

"It's beautiful," Rachel said.

The male manager also nodded vigorously. "I still remember this spectacular view I saw once. The entire sky looked like it was on fire... After all this time, I can still picture it so clearly..."

The whole sky had looked like it was burning?

Rachel tilted her head to the side as she studied the clouds. She remembered she had also seen something just like that once.

It had been three years ago, on the day she'd been thrown into prison.

The memory of her being shoved out the back door of the court and squeezed into a police car was still so clear. As was the memory of just how fiercely red the sky had been on that day. It was like it was sending her away with one last hurrah.

Victor glanced at Rachel and caught sight of her expression.

There was something about her silence, and the small smile on her face, that made him want to stand and watch the sunset with her forever.

As soon as the thought crossed his mind, he was shocked.

Luckily for him, Rachel was so focused on the sunset that she didn't notice his sudden change in expression.

Their driver had already arrived and pulled the car to a stop in front of them. He came around the side and opened the back door for them. He cleared his throat and said, "Miss Bennet, Mr. Sullivan."

Victor ignored the open door, went around to the other side of the car and got in. Rachel quietly got into the car on the side the driver was waiting.

Under the managers' gaze, the Bentley slowly drove away.

Victor's silence eventually started to make Rachel feel uncomfortable. She glanced at him out the corner of her eye and noticed his vacant look. She frowned. Now that she'd taken notice of his strange attitude, it was all the more noticeable.

She couldn't understand what she had done wrong now. He had been fine while they waited for the car, but now this?

"He really does change his mood quickly," Rachel murmured. She realized too late that she'd said this a little louder than she'd intended to.

She didn't know why she had chosen to speak instead of just keeping her thoughts to herself.

It was a mistake on her behalf. It was so quiet in here that they would have been able to hear a pin drop. What had made her think she wouldn't be heard?

Now what had she done?

The words had barely left her mouth before she realized she had made a mistake.

The driver was just about to brake at a crossing. Her words startled him so much that he slammed his foot down on the peddle, braking hard.

The car's tires squealed on the road.

Rachel's body jolted forwards toward the passenger seat in front of her.

The last thought that crossed her mind in that split second was, 'Not the head, again.'

There was no time for her to react. The best she could do was close her eyes and wait for the impending pain to come.

# Chapter 129 Worse Than A Monster

Rachel waited for the pain, but it never came.

She frowned in confusion, but she didn't dare open her eyes just yet. Was the seat in front of her so well cushioned that she felt nothing? The only thing she felt was a cool weight on her forehead.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to brake so sharply," the driver hurriedly apologized. He twisted around in his seat to look back at them. "Mr. Sullivan, Miss Bennet, are you two alright?"

Rachel reached out and pressed her hand against the back of the chair. Then she slowly opened her eyes. Before her she didn't see the seat, but a hand.

She was frozen in surprise, and before she could react, the hand was pulled away. "We're fine," Victor said from beside her.

Then it all made sense.

The realization of what had happened suddenly hit her.

She finally understood.

She hadn't bumped into the chair... But into Victor's hand. Had he prevented her from hitting her head? Rachel lowered her gaze and half-hooded her eyes with her lashes. It looked like she was staring down at her feet, but in reality she was looking at Victor out the corner of her eyes.

The traffic light turned green and the driver eased the car forward again.

Victor had already settled into his usual stance, and was facing forward with his normal cold expression. Rachel took the opportunity to study his sculptured face, defined jaw and tall nose. She couldn't help but feel that if she were to poke his cheek that her finger would turn to ice.

There was absolutely no emotion shown on his face, making it that much more difficult for Rachel to connect with the man who had just saved her.

"Stop the car," Victor suddenly said.

Rachel gave a small shake of her head and broke out the slight daze she'd gone into. She looked out the window to see where they were, and was rather surprised to find they were nearly at Sue Garden. She hadn't even noticed how the time had gone.

The driver pulled over as soon as Victor told him to. "Get out the car," Victor said.

"Yes, Mr. Sullivan," the driver said and obediently began to unfasten his seat belt. He reached for the door handle and tugged it open. Clearly, he thought Victor was talking to him. <sup>2</sup>

He'd only opened the door a crack before Victor spoke again. "I said get out the car." But this time, Victor was quite obviously looking at Rachel.

Rachel stared at him. She must be hearing wrong.

To say the least, both Rachel and the driver were rather shocked.

But Rachel quickly calmed herself and kept her expression as neutral as possible. She knew what kind of scum Victor was; she should have expected something like this from him. She didn't argue or complain though. She remained as obedient and as passive as she'd been the entire day.

Without hesitation, she opened the door and got out.

But for some reason, this only irritated Victor more. He narrowed his eyes and his naturally cold aura became icy.

He couldn't believe Rachel hadn't even asked him why.

Did she really not want to know why he had asked her to leave the car?

Why was she in such a hurry to leave in the first place? Was he really that much of a monster?

It was quite a coincidence that he thought that, because Rachel didn't see him as a monster; she saw him as something much worse.

"Turn around and drive on," Victor coldly ordered the driver.

The driver said nothing. A chill suddenly wracked his body, almost like a warning. He didn't dare ask questions or try and argue. He just did as he was told, turned the car around and drove in the other direction.

As they sped down the road, Victor kept glancing in the rearview mirror with a dull expression. They were already quite a distance away, but he could still vaguely see Rachel's figure reflected there.

He could see enough to know that she'd taken off the coat, hung it over her arm, and was now casually strolling down the road towards Sue Garden.

"Mr. Sullivan, are we going back to the company?" the driver asked as they approached a fork in the road.

"Go to Crown Club."

Victor lowered his eyes and looked down at his left hand.

It wasn't only Rachel who couldn't understand why he'd saved her, Victor himself was having trouble figuring out why he'd done it. It had been reflex. He had seen her jolt forward and had just stretched out his hand to stop her. He had only realized what he had done when he felt the warmth of her forehead in his hand.

His fingers were curled towards his palm as if he could still feel her delicate skin there.

He didn't know what he was feeling. The sensation was indescribable. But he knew he wanted time to freeze right here, in this moment.

Suddenly, the sky growled violently above them.

Thunder rumbled through the grey clouds in an almost threatening manner.

The driver leaned forward to peer up at the sky. It was already dark, close to night. With the

addition of the clouds drifting in, it made it look like it was near midnight.

"Mr. Sullivan, it looks like it's going to rain," the driver said.

Victor had immediately looked into the rearview mirror when he had heard the thunder. But Rachel was gone. He couldn't see her anymore.

The driver hunkered down in his seat in an almost sulky manner. He muttered quietly to himself, "I don't know if Miss Bennet has reached Sue Garden yet. With this rain coming in, I don't think it's safe for her to be out there alone."

The moment the words left his mouth, he instantly regretted it.

There was a chance Victor would think he was scolding him. Victor hated Rachel so much that he had driven her out the car and made her walk back to Sue Garden... It was probably a stupid thing for the driver to say what he had.

Never before in his life had the driver wanted to slap himself in the face as badly as he did now. Why hadn't he thought before he had spoken?

The car was eerily silent for a little while. Victor frowned and stared out the window at the darkening sky. Finally he said, "Call home. Tell them I'm not coming back tonight."

The driver nearly wanted to pass out from relief. He'd been expecting Victor to scold him, but he hadn't.

"Yes, sir," the driver said, then phoned through to Sue Garden.

He didn't have to wait long until someone answered. "Hello, this is Sue Garden. Who's speaking?"

"Lukas, it's Issac speaking. I just called to tell you that Mr. Sullivan won't be returning tonight."

"Alright," Lukas said.

Before he asked his next question, the driver looked up into the rearview mirror to try and gauge Victor's mood from his expression. In a casual tone he said, "Has Miss Bennet returned yet? She isn't with Mr. Sullivan."

Lukas' eyebrows furrowed in confusion. He had thought that Mr. Sullivan would surely drive Miss Bennet home since he was the one brought her out.

If Miss Bennet was coming back alone tonight, did that mean... Had something happened between the two of them during the day?

Lukas glanced at the steadily worsening weather. The thunder was booming all around the building now, and he could feel the temperature starting to drop. Miss Bennet was not safe out there on her own.

He couldn't help but feel worried. "Miss Bennet..." he muttered to himself, as if saying her name would help to keep her safe.

Suddenly, the doorbell outside Sue Garden rang.

Lukas turned to one of the servants and sent her to check who it was. A few moments later, the servant returned. "It's Miss Bennet," she said, her eyes wide.

"Go get an umbrella and pick her up." Lukas completely forgot he was still on the line. He wasn't thinking properly at the moment.

The servant nodded, grabbed an umbrella and trotted out to meet Rachel.

Lukas was still on call when he'd spoken to the servant. The driver had heard every word. The cold, brooding atmosphere in the car immediately lifted.

The driver breathed a heavy sigh of relief when he finally heard Lukas say, "Issac, Miss Bennet just got back."

"That's good," the driver answered then hung up the call.

Issac lowered his eyes from the rearview mirror and concentrated on the road ahead of him. Mr. Sullivan was such a tough man to read, and he kept his emotions so well hidden that it was nearly impossible to know what he was thinking.

But it was obvious from his actions that he cared for Rachel. And the driver knew Victor well enough to know that he hadn't called the Sue Garden just to tell Lukas that he wouldn't be returning; it had been to check if Rachel had got back safely.



# Chapter 130 Call Her

The second Rachel stepped into the living room, a gust of wind blew past her. Night had fallen, clouds were looming in the sky, and she could hear the sound of rumbling thunder.

Lukas asked with concern, "Ma'am, are you alright?"

"Huh?" Rachel sounded confused. "Why do you ask? I'm fine."

'Aside from being flummoxed by Victor's behavior today,' she thought to herself.

Upon noticing that she was acting like her usual self, Lukas was relieved. "That's good to hear. By the way, Miss Bennet, what would you like for dinner tonight? I'll ask the chef to prepare it for you."

"I'm good with whatever you decide. I'm a little tired, Lukas. I'm heading upstairs to take a nap first," she replied.

Lukas nodded, and Rachel went upstairs to her bedroom to catch some sleep. She didn't wake up until it was nine in the evening. At this time, Lukas knocked on her door.

"Ma'am, are you awake?" he asked.

"I am." Rachel got up to open the door. "Is dinner ready?"

With a gentle smile, Lukas replied, "It's already nine, ma'am. I didn't want to disturb your sleep, but dinner has already gotten cold. I'll ask the cook to prepare another batch for you."

"Thanks, Lukas."

"Oh, and ma'am? Would you like to have dinner here in your room or go downstairs in the dining room?" Lukas asked.

Rachel was a bit surprised to finally realize that the bodyguards outside her door were now gone. Suddenly, it dawned on her that she didn't see them when she went back to her bedroom a few hours ago either.

Noticing her confusion, Lukas explained, "Mr. Sullivan said that as long as you're well-behaved, you can leave your room as you please, but you may not leave the Sue Garden's premises."

'He wants me to behave?

That's ironic coming from him.

Well, at least I now have more space to move around. I'm glad my tolerance of his overbearing attitude today wasn't for nothing.' With that in mind, she adjusted her mood and nodded at Lukas. 1

"I'll go downstairs to have dinner in a bit," she said.

"Very well, ma'am," Lukas replied. "I'll head to the kitchen and tell the cook to prepare your dinner at once. For the time being, you can rest a little longer."

Afterwards, he went back to the kitchen to tell the kitchen staff to prepare Rachel's dinner.

Meanwhile, she stood at her door, pondering for a moment before closing the door again. She walked back to her bed, sat on it, picked up her phone, and looked for Andy's number.

Victor only permitted her to move freely within the Sue Garden, but she knew that he wouldn't allow her to leave the place that easily.

Once Quintin had located the prison Abby was hidden in, Rachel must figure out how to get her out of Apliaria as soon as possible. Rachel didn't have much time left to spare, so she couldn't just sit here and do nothing. 2

Seconds later, she dialed Andy's number.

Meanwhile, in the Crown Club, the manager walked over, stared at the door of the room, and spoke to the waiter guarding the door. "Is Mr. Sullivan still in there?"

The waiter nodded his head.

Because of that, the manager frowned, uncertain of what he should do.

"Should we call a doctor? What if something bad happens?" The waiter got worried as well. Both of them knew that if something were to happen to Victor in here, the whole club would suffer the consequences.

"But Mr. Sullivan gave strict orders not to allow anyone to enter the room," the manager said with a sigh. "We'll have to wait and see what happens. I'll call Mr. Scott and inform him of the situation. In the meantime, keep an eye on him. If anything happens, report to me immediately."

After that, the manager glanced at the door again, took out his phone, and went back to the lobby.

When the manager called, Carson was inside his car, waiting for someone. He was tapping his fingers on the steering wheel every now and then, and his eyes were locked on the entrance of the office building nearby.

"What's up?" Carson answered the call while turning off the music.

"Mr. Scott, I'm really sorry for bothering you at this time of the night, but we really don't know what to do anymore," said the manager in an anxious tone. "Mr. Sullivan is here in the club tonight. Our employee found him looking very exhausted. He doesn't look very well. We've thought about calling him a doctor, but he refused to allow anyone to enter the room. He's been in there for hours, and we haven't heard anything from him." 1

Upon hearing that, Carson knitted his brows.

'This is rare. Why is Victor drinking alone?' he thought to himself.

"If he told you not to enter the room, I'd advise you to do as you're told." Carson glanced at his watch, and then at the entrance of the building. There was still no one coming out.

He was the revered son of the Scott family. People normally waited for him, but now, he was here, waiting for a woman who had been late for over twenty minutes, and still hadn't shown up!

If it weren't for the important documents in her possession, he wouldn't have waited for her

this long.

As those thoughts troubled Carson, it infuriated him even more.

"But, sir... It's been two hours since we last heard from Mr. Sullivan! I'm afraid that something might've happened to him. We're too afraid of breaking in without his permission. But I think he wouldn't mind if you go in to check on him."

'Is that so?' Carson thought to himself.

A smile appeared on his lips. The manager really believed that Carson and Victor were that close. Although he was a good friend of Victor's, he still had to watch his behavior around him, for he knew just how capricious Victor could be.

'If I were to break in, I wouldn't even be able to ask him if he's alright. Victor will probably throw me out of the room, and then the next day, he'll exile me from the country if he's that pissed off!

It's not like this kind of thing hasn't happened before.

I'm just smart enough not to piss Victor off. He's clearly not in the mood to speak to anyone. Besides, I have a more pressing matter to deal with right now,' Carson said to himself.

"I'm busy," he said to the manager.

At this point, the manager was at a loss for words. Moments ago, he held onto hope that Carson would be able to help them.

Suddenly, the waiter ran to the manager's side, and said to him, "I just heard a sound of something falling to the ground from inside, sir! Do you think Mr. Sullivan passed out or something?"

The manager's heart started racing.

Carson managed to hear the waiter from the other end of the line. He stopped tapping on the steering wheel, and thought of a person.

"I think there's someone else who might be able to help," Carson said to the manager.

"Truly, Mr. Scott?" Hope returned to the manager's heart upon hearing Carson say that.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

At this time, someone knocked on Carson's car window. He held his phone's receiver, looked out the window, and saw a woman standing outside.

'She's finally here,' he thought.

Carson rolled down the window. The manager waited for a while, but he still hadn't heard him speak, so he called out to Carson, "Mr. Scott?"

"Yes, I'm here." Carson glanced at the woman and smiled.

"Who is this 'someone'?" asked the manager.

"Oh, you already know who she is." As Carson spoke, he opened the door and got out of the car. He put one of his hands in his pocket, stared at the woman in front of him, and continued, "Mr. Sullivan's ex-wife, Rachel."

The manager's face turned grim.

Once more, his hopeful heart was broken.

"But, Mr. Scott!"

Before he could even finish talking, Carson hung up on him.

When the waiter saw the disappointed look on the manager's face, he asked, "What's wrong with Mr. Sullivan's ex-wife?"

Right after the waiter said that, the manager received a message.

It was a message from Carson, containing Rachel's phone number.

# Captivation: Want Nothing But You Chapter 131

## Chapter 131 A Deal With Him

The manager, Dwayne, stared down at his phone with a dull expression. He pulled his mouth into a thin line then nibbled on his bottom lip. He didn't know how to explain to the waiter what kind of person Mr. Sullivan's ex-wife was. He supposed he could start with the fact that she was the daughter of the Bennet family. It didn't help that he didn't know much about her as a person. The only knowledge he had of her was what he'd heard from the rumors circulating through the upper-class. But one thing he knew for sure was that Mr. Sullivan didn't like Rachel, and that Rachel had done a lot of crazy and scandalizing things. The most recent gossip on her was that she had bashed someone over the head with a wine bottle. The manager gritted his teeth, trying to convince himself to make the call. But in the end, he couldn't. He turned to the waiter and held out the phone. "You call Miss Bennet and ask her to come." He didn't give the waiter a chance to disagree. He pushed the phone into his hand and left, leaving the waiter to stare down at Rachel's number with a dazed expression. After a while, he dialed it. Rachel had just hung up the phone after arranging a meeting date with Andy. She tossed her phone onto her bedside table and headed towards the bathroom to take a shower. She was hungry, and wanted to wash up before she went to get something to eat. But she couldn't have taken more than two steps before her phone rang. She turned her head to glance over her shoulder at the number displayed on the screen. It was an unknown caller. Who on earth would be calling her at this hour? There were a very select few people who knew her personal phone number. She declined the call and turned towards the bathroom again. Her phone immediately started ringing. She groaned in the back of her throat and looked over at the screen. It was the same number as before. She had a feeling that whoever was calling her would persist until she answered. Rachel hesitated for a second longer before she picked up. "Hello, who's speaking?" "Excuse my calling at this hour, but... Is this Miss Rachel Bennet speaking?" the waiter said after he glanced briefly at the name on the manager's phone. He wanted to be as respectful as possible in this situation. Rachel frowned. "This is Rachel Bennet speaking. How can I help you?" She could have sworn she heard the caller heave a sigh of relief when he heard her name. "Miss Bennet, I'm terribly sorry to bother you. This is the Crown Club calling." The waiter paused and took a deep breath to calm his racing heart. He'd rehearsed this in his head multiple times. All he had to do was repeat it out loud. In a slow, measured voice he said, "Mr. Sullivan is here drinking. He's been here for a couple of hours now, and usually that wouldn't bother us. But he looks haggard and uncomfortable. He won't let anyone else enter the room, and we are starting to get worried about him." 2 'Victor is uncomfortable? Has something happened to him?' Whatever it was, she was sure it didn't have anything to do with her. "We first called Mr. Scott. He gave us your name and number and told us to call

you, Miss Bennet. He said..." the waiter trailed off and nibbled his lip. After a moment of careful consideration he said, "He said you were the only one who would be able to get through to Mr. Sullivan."

The corners of Rachel's mouth twitched as if she couldn't decide whether she wanted to smile or grimace. She would have liked to think she'd heard wrong, but she knew that was impossible. How was she the only person who could get through to him? What made those people think she was willing to go to the Crown Club for that man? And even if she did go, she was almost certain that Victor would throw her out the room as soon as he saw her. "Miss Bennet?" the waiter said when she remained silent. "Is he really uncomfortable?" Rachel asked as she sat down daintily on the edge of the bed.

"Yes." "How uncomfortable is he really? Does he look like he's dying?" Rachel asked.

as

The waiter blinked in confusion.

He couldn't understand why Rachel was asking these types of questions. He wanted to put the phone down, but he immediately thought back to the manager's order to get Rachel to the club as soon as possible; even if that meant entertaining Rachel's odd questions. "Mr. Sullivan locked himself in the room two hours ago. We haven't heard any noise from inside, aside from something falling just now." It sounded like Victor really was in some kind of trouble. But it was not her problem, and she had nothing to do with it. There was a saying that said when one's enemy was ill, it was the best time to take them down. While Rachel knew she wasn't that vicious and vindictive, she thought it couldn't hurt to give him a little push in the right direction. "Sounds serious," Rachel said in mock concern. If the waiter had been able to see her face, he'd have seen the sinister smile on her lips, and the cold light twinkling in her eyes. "So, are you coming to help him?" the waiter asked, hopeful that she was going to swoop in and save the day. But then just like that, his hopes were dashed when Rachel said, "Unfortunately I'm busy at the moment and can't come and help. I guess you'll just have to find someone else." Without giving the waiter a chance to answer, Rachel hung up. The waiter stood dead still with the phone pressed against his ear and his mouth half open. The steady beeping of the line was the only thing that eventually dragged him back to his senses. "So?" the manager asked when he saw the waiter had finished on the phone. "Is Miss Bennet coming to fetch Mr. Sullivan?" Slowly, the waiter turned to look at the manager. He stiffly shook his head. "Miss Bennet said that... That she's busy." The manager stared at the waiter in shock. Rachel held her phone loosely in her hand and headed to the bathroom. Before the call, she'd wanted to take a shower, but now a bath felt more appropriate. She had just turned on the taps when she suddenly had a wondrous idea. Seeing as Victor wasn't feeling well, she wondered if she'd be able to take advantage of his

weakened state and ask for something. Like... Her freedom? Rachel pouted as she looked down at her phone. She wondered what chance she had of making an honorable deal with that bastard. She unlocked her phone and went back into the call log

The most recent call was from Crown Club. The one under that was from Andy.

She'd arranged a meeting with him for the day after tomorrow. Now that she had freedom to move around in Sue Garden, she had planned to climb over the wall and escape to the meeting. But that plan was still too risky. If she was caught, Victor would be more suspicious than ever. If there was a chance she could find an easier solution, then surely that was something worth fighting for. Rachel stood silently staring at her phone as she mentally made a list of all the pros and cons of the situation. Then she gave a small shake of her head and quickly pulled on the clothes she'd already removed. She clutched her phone and headed towards her bedroom

She snatched up her coat and threw open the bedroom door, only to find Lukas was already standing there with his fist raised to knock. His eyes darted from her face to the coat in her hand, and then he asked, "Miss Bennet, are you heading out?" "Yes." "Miss Bennet, you know Mr. Sullivan permits you to only walk within Sue Garden. If you want to leave..." Lukas' tone became more serious, and a small frown played on the corners of his lips. "Lukas. I'm going to fetch him," Rachel said seriously. "Mr. Sullivan?" Lukas asked in confusion.

Rachel nodded. When Lukas still didn't look convinced she added, "If you don't believe me, you can have the driver follow me." "No, please don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I'm just worried about you going out by yourself this late at night," Lukas explained. Rachel gave a faint smile. While Lukas sounded convincing enough, she knew he was only worried that she would make trouble for herself and everyone else if she left. She couldn't blame him really, not after she'd pushed Alicia into the lake in front of everyone. "Will you please ask the driver to take me to him in that case?" Rachel said pleasantly. "Okay," Lukas said obediently and turned to look for the driver. Rachel leaned her shoulder against the doorframe and watched his retreating form. She looked like she was in no great hurry, and like she was content to wait for as long as she needed. Then she suddenly had a thought. "Lukas," she called out to him. 2 "Yes?"

"Would you please also ask the kitchen staff to prepare some soup to cure a hangover?" Rachel casually asked. This was enough to tell Lukas that Mr. Sullivan was probably drunk. Lukas nodded slowly and said softly, as if he were telling her a secret, "Mr. Sullivan has serious stomach problems. He's had gastritis since he was a child. I still remember he was always in hospital during middle school because of his ulcer. I have no doubt that he's going to have terrible stomachache when you fetch him. His medicine is in the car if he needs it. Drinking aggravates the ulcer, especially if he's been drinking on an empty

stomach." This was the first time Rachel was hearing about Victor's stomach problem. And drinking on an empty stomach would give him terrible stomach ache? She never would have guessed this by the way he'd been forcing her to drink with him up on the rooftop that night. 'I don't think it would be a bad thing if he died of stomach ache. The world would be rid of one more evil person,' Rachel thought, pursing her lips.

# Captivation: Want Nothing But You Chapter 132

## Chapter 132 I'm Here To Collect His Body

In the Crown Club, a dark red Ferrari stopped in front of the club's entrance. At this time, the manager was already waiting at the entrance. When he saw the car pull over, he quickly walked over to open the car for Carson. "Mr. Scott, you're finally here."

Carson tossed his car key to the manager, and stepped out of the car with an annoyed look. Today was supposed to be a nice, peaceful evening for him, until the manager gave him a call. He had no idea that the woman who took the documents was surprisingly beautiful; she looked submissive and obedient, but she was actually quite flamboyant. That woman's image kept flashing through Carson's mind. After a brief pause, he walked towards the Crown Club building. Seeing that Carson didn't say a word, the manager took a deep breath, handed the car key to the valet, and followed Carson. "Mr. Scott, we've already called Miss Bennet, but she said she was busy. Our only choice was to call you again," the manager explained. Carson stopped abruptly to ask, "What did you just say?" The manager almost run into him, but quickly managed to stop as well. Confused by the question, he asked, "Huh?" "You just said that you called Rachel. What did she say?" Carson's eyes lit up as if he had heard something interesting.

The manager thought he had said something bad, and it made him feel nervous. He quickly recalled what he said moments ago, realizing that he didn't say anything wrong. Under Carson's gaze, he answered with uncertainty, "Miss Bennet said she was busy." Carson chuckled. "Did she just give up such a wonderful opportunity?" "Mr. Scott, what do you mean?" "Nothing." Carson put one hand in his pocket and said, "Let's go. Didn't you say that Victor passed out?"

The manager was at a loss for words. 'All I said was that Mr. Sullivan wasn't feeling well, and that we heard a thud.' He wanted to correct Carson, but he decided against it when he remembered that Victor hadn't come out of the room for over two hours. And judging by the sound of that bump, Victor might've actually passed out. Thus, the manager overtook



Carson, and led the way. But as soon as they entered the club, a Maybach slowly pulled over behind them. When Carson turned around, he caught a glimpse of the Maybach's license plate number. Seconds later, someone got out from the backseat. At the same time, the manager noticed the sound coming from behind him, causing him to turn around as well. He was stunned when he saw who came out of the car. "Dwayne?" Carson raised an eyebrow as he called the manager's name. "Mr. Scott." Dwayne sounded terrified. "Didn't you tell me that she was too busy to come here?" Carson asked Dwayne while he was staring at the woman walking towards them. The manager was surprised to see her here as well.

'The waiter did tell me that Miss Bennet said she was busy. So why is she here now?' he thought "Mr. Scott," Rachel greeted. She was surprised to see Carson. She thought that the waiter called her earlier because Carson was too busy to help out. "Miss Bennet, I didn't expect to see you again so soon." Rachel was not pleased to see him here. 'With Carson here, it's less likely for Victor to agree to let me go out,' she thought. 'I'd rather go home and go back to sleep than to waste my time here if I knew that he would be here as well. Besides, I hadn't had dinner yet! Such a waste of time.' With that in mind, she said flatly, "I heard that Victor isn't feeling well, and that he's about to die. I'm here to collect his body. But since you're already here, I suppose I'm no longer needed."

Carson fell silent. 'Did she say she's going to collect Victor's corpse?' He turned to the manager, who was currently looking at the waiter. Quietly, the manager asked the waiter what the guy said to Rachel exactly. The waiter's face turned pale, and almost blurted out, "Mr. Dwayne, I never said that Mr. Sullivan was about to die." Beads of sweat formed on the manager's forehead. 'What the hell is going on?'. Carson coughed to stifle his laughter. Seeing that Rachel was about to leave, he asked, "Where are you going?" "Home. I want to go back to sleep." After a pause, she added, "I'm pregnant, so I'm always drowsy. I'm sleeping for two people, you know. Besides, there are too many people here in the club. It's not safe for me."

Carson was amused.

'Her reasons are viable, but they do sound weird,' he thought to himself. Rachel smiled at him perfunctorily. "Thank you for doing this in my stead." Having said that, she turned around and went back to the Maybach. Suddenly, Carson felt that he had been set up somehow. Obviously, he wasn't happy about it. Usually, he was the one who did it to other people. Nobody had ever successfully set him up. "I've already made an exception because of her. I'm not gonna do it twice.'

Upon seeing her open the door, Carson strode forward. He pressed the door, closing the door again. Rachel frowned as she lowered her head. The hair on her forehead covered her

eyes. "Anything else I can help with, Mr. Scott?" she asked, looking into his eyes. Carson looked back at her. Her eyes were like bottomless voids, displaying no emotion. It almost felt like he was bullying an innocent little girl. "Actually, I suddenly remembered that I have something important to do right now." Carson withdrew his hand and scratched his nose. "I can't help Victor." Rachel fell silent. "Since you're already here, can't you just take him home? Don't worry, the manager's here to guarantee your safety. He'll definitely..." Before the end of Carson's sentence, he glanced at her belly and continued, "not let anything happen to you and your baby." Rachel gritted her teeth as she looked back at him. 'He just made up an excuse!' Seeing the anger on her face put Carson in a good mood. He beckoned the manager to approach, and said, "As you can see, Miss Bennet is here." Upon hearing him say that, Rachel turned to the manager, feeling that he looked kind of familiar.

The manager recognized Rachel. The last time he saw her, she hit Trevor with a bottle. He was right there when it happened. "Yes, I know who she is," the manager said as he nodded repeatedly. "Good. Take her to Mr. Sullivan. She's pregnant right now, so make sure she doesn't get hurt. Otherwise, you know what will happen to you." The manager nodded again; firmly this time. Afterwards, Carson stretched out his arms and said, "Anyway, Miss Bennet, I have to get going. Thanks for taking care of Victor." He leaned closer to Rachel, and whispered to her ear, "After all, he's the father of your child. Even if he is dead, you should at least let your baby take one last look at its father, right?"

The corners of Rachel's mouth twitched as she tried to resist the urge to kick Carson's gonads.

Carson was in a chipper mood. He took back his car key from the valet, held the door of his Ferrari, jumped into the driver's seat, and drove away without looking back. Meanwhile, the manager stood frozen for a while. Seeing that Rachel wasn't moving, he said, "Miss Bennet..." "Just lead the way," Rachel said after taking a deep breath.

## Captivation: Want Nothing But You Chapter 133

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**Chapter 133 Who Did You Bribe**

Within no time, Rachel and Dwayne arrived in front of the room Victor was in. Dwayne walked towards the door, and cautiously knocked on it a few times. "Mr. Sullivan, Miss Bennet is here to see you." However, he received no response from inside. It had been a couple minutes since he spoke, but it was still eerily quiet inside. Dwayne frowned. He had a bad feeling about this. Then, he turned to Rachel, and pleaded, "Ma'am, I..." Before he could

even complete his sentence, Rachel had already tried to open the door. However, when she turned the doorknob, she realized that the door was locked from inside. "Do you have the key?" Rachel asked Dwayne. He immediately nodded. "I'll go to the security office to grab the key at once." Having said that, he quickly went on his way. Soon, he returned with a bunch of keys. He fumbled for the key to this specific room, and quickly opened the door. As soon as Rachel opened the door, she saw that the lights weren't on, and the room was engulfed in darkness. Only the projection of the screen and a faint fluorescent light allowed her to see a vague layout of the room. Rachel swept her eyes across the room, and shortly found a man lying on the sofa. He seemed to be asleep. His legs were bent above the armrest of the sofa, and the rest of his body lay flat. Perhaps due to flashing light of the screen, he had placed his left arm over his eyes to shield him from the dazzling light. Rachel strode forward and stood beside the sofa. She saw an empty bottle of liquor on the table, and the faint scent of alcohol wafted into her nose. She then lowered her head to stare at Victor's face. When she leaned closer, she saw that his brows were tightly knitted, and his right arm was pressed against his stomach. Despite the faint light, she could see the slightly bulging veins on his temples clearly. All of a sudden, she remembered what Lukas told her before she came here. Rachel turned to Dwayne, and said, "Dwayne, go back to the car and tell the driver to find Victor's stomach medicine for me, will you?" "Right away, ma'am!" Dwayne nodded firmly before he left the room. Rachel's eyes dimmed. For a moment, she really wanted to leave this place, thinking that it would benefit her to just leave Victor here to die of pain. But she knew full well that this wouldn't be enough to kill him. If she were to leave right now, and if he were to find out that she was here and left him to die, he was definitely going to make her suffer for it. 'I'd rather not live to see that day,' she thought to herself. And so, she decided against leaving him, and fetched him a glass of water. Moments later, she went back to the sofa with a glass of water in hand. She wondered if she should wake Victor up or wait for the manager to bring the medicine, and let him wake Victor up instead. While she was hesitating, she suddenly felt someone grab her wrist. 1 Rachel was stupefied. Before she could even react, she got pulled down and lost her balance, causing her to fall to the ground. And just before she could fall onto Victor's body, he suddenly clasped her waist, turned over, and pressed her under his body. Everything happened within the blink of an eye. Crash! Having no time to react, Rachel accidentally dropped the glass of water and it fell to the ground. The contents of the glass spilled out, and some of it splashed onto their faces. The surge of pain she felt on her back made Rachel angry. "Victor, what the hell are you..." Only then did he realize who he had pinned down. Suddenly, Victor's eyes flashed with hesitation and shock. He had always had gastrointestinal problems, and everyone around him knew about it. Back when Carolyn was still alive, she searched far and wide to find a doctor who could cure him. She would always urge him to eat on time, and take all sorts of medication. And as a result, his gastrointestinal problems did not plague him for a long time. 3 But sadly, those painful problems returned tonight. At first, it was just a slight, stinging pain, so he thought it wasn't going to be a problem. Thus, he chose to stay here, hoping for the pain to dissipate. He didn't allow anyone into the room, because he would never let anyone see him being so vulnerable. Later on, the pain still didn't subside.

Instead, it became more and more severe. At the same time, he started to feel dizzy. All this time, he was in a state of being half-asleep and half awake. When he heard someone enter the room, he instinctively became vigilant. Victor believed that it was some fool who wanted to take advantage of his weakness to attack him, so he took the initiative to strike first. But little did he realize that it was actually just Rachel. 'Why did she come here? Who told her that I'm here?' a After a quick assessment of the situation, he made an assumption. His face suddenly turned cold. "Rachel, you're really something. You've even managed to bribe my people to get information on me, I see." 'Damn it! I was so stupid to consider dropping my prejudice against her. She hasn't changed at all! She's still the same despicable woman she had always been.

I even thought of letting her stay in the Sue Garden after giving birth to my child. That was the dumbest idea I've ever had,' Victor thought as he tightened his grip on her wrist. Rachel groaned in pain as her face turned pale while she was struggling to break free. "I have no idea what you're talking about! I bribed your people? That's insane! Let me go!" 'Argh! How could I be so crazy to think that I could ever strike a bargain with this maniacal bastard! I even asked the manager to get some medicine, and poured him a glass of water. I should've just walked away at once-no! I should've just killed this scumbag!" "Oh, you have no idea, huh? Is that true?" Victor asked in a cold voice. "Tell me! Who did you bribe?" "What?" Seeing that she was still dodging his question, his face turned grim. "Who told you that I'm here? Don't even think of telling me that you just happened to drop by and found me here! Rachel, I told you that if you ever play tricks again, I'll break your legs!" Rachel gritted her teeth and glared at him. "I said tell me who you bribed!" Victor shouted; louder this time. Suddenly, Rachel stopped struggling. The anger in her eyes disappeared as she calmly replied, "Carson."

Her mood changed so fast that no trace of her anger could be seen anymore. It was as if she was never angry in the first place.

In reality, it wasn't because she wasn't angry. It was just that after everything that had happened, she knew full well that her explanation meant nothing to him. He would never believe her anyway. Upon hearing her answer, Victor refused to believe it. Not because he was certain Carson would betray him, but because he was sure that Rachel could never bribe that man. "Rachel, you know that my patience is thin. I suggest you tell me the truth now! Do you think I wouldn't be able to find out if you don't tell me?" The sound of his voice was so frigid that it sent shivers throughout her veins. "Go ahead and have me investigated then. I don't care." Rachel just stared at him passively. This time, the pain coming from her wrist became more severe. Victor was clenching her wrist even harder. It was so tight that she felt like her wrist was about to get dislocated.

This man's strength was far beyond an ordinary man. Rachel's face turned pale as she stared into his vicious eyes. She displayed no intention of backing down. While they were in a stalemate, the door of the room suddenly opened.

"Miss Bennet, I've found Mr. Sullivan's medicine..." The second Dwayne came in, he saw what was happening and stopped mid-sentence. Victor let go of Rachel, and stood up to look at Dwayne. Almost scared out of his wits, Dwayne glanced at Victor and said, "Mr. Sullivan, I..." "What did you just say? Did Rachel tell you to get my medicine?" Victor asked, unsure of what he had heard just now. Dwayne swallowed nervously, and stammered, "Yes, sir."

Surprised by the answer, Victor stared at the medicine bottle in the man's hand. Victor was quite familiar with that medicine. In the past, Carolyn would ask someone to keep one in every car, fearing that he would need it if he ever suffered from gastrointestinal pain. 'Who told Rachel about my gastrointestinal problems, and this medicine? Did she come here because she knew I was in pain?' For a long time, the room was engulfed in silence. Dwayne stood frozen as his heart raced at the sight of Victor's silence. "Mr. Sullivan, is there anything wrong?" If there was really something wrong, he was as good as doomed. Dwayne trembled all over. Soon, beads of sweat rolled down his forehead.

## Captivation: Want Nothing But You Chapter 134

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### Chapter 134 He Is Dangerous

"Get out!" Victor commanded. Dwayne shivered and didn't even dare to utter a word. He turned around, ready to leave the room. But just as he was about to leave the room, he heard Victor's harsh voice. "Wait!" Dwayne almost tripped and fell when he heard him. "Do you need anything else from me, Mr. Sullivan?" Victor's eyes fell on the medicine in the man's hand, but he didn't say anything. Dwayne quickly realized what Victor meant, and put down the bottle on the table. Then, he glanced at Rachel as she sat on the sofa before he left. Seconds later, the door was closed. Once more, the room was engulfed in eerie darkness. Rachel held her wrist, massaging it with her fingers. It hurt so much that she groaned in pain. Had Dwayne been a minute later, Victor would've broken her wrist. Victor's face turned grim when he saw her massaging her wrist. "How did you find out about this medicine?" The sound of his voice was a little softer this time, but it still remained frigid. 2 Rachel glanced back at him and sneered, "Don't you already know how I found out? How would I know that you're here and not feeling well? And how would I have known about the medicine you need to take to alleviate your stomach pain? It was all because I bribed your

man, right?" Displeasure flashed through Victor's eyes, but he suppressed his anger, thinking that he might've misunderstood her. Rachel had been massaging her wrist for a while now, but the pain still hadn't dissipated. At this moment, she didn't care whether her words would vex Victor. He had already assumed the worst of her, sentenced, and punished her in his mind, so she didn't care anymore. This wasn't the first time that she had gotten on his nerves for no reason anyway. Victor fell silent for a moment before he asked, "Did Lukas tell you about this?" That was one of the possibilities he considered. Rachel stared back at him and didn't deny his inference. Under the light reflected by the screen, he could see Rachel's pale face, and the red marks on her wrist.

He took out his phone, and dialed a number. Soon, the call connected, and he said, "Bring me a first aid kit." Afterwards, he hung up at once. Within a minute, someone knocked on the door.

"Come in." Slowly, the door opened from outside. Dwayne had returned with a medicine kit in hand. "Mr. Sullivan, I've brought what you asked for. Were you hur-" "Leave the medicine box and get the hell out," Victor interrupted him. Upon hearing that, Dwayne put down the medicine kit and left the room at once. It almost looked like he scurried out of there. As soon as the door was closed, Victor picked up the medicine kit, glanced at Rachel while she was lost in thought, and walked over. "Give me your hand," he said. Victor put down the medicine kit beside her, opened it, and looked for something. Soon, he found what he was looking for. It was an ointment. Upon seeing the ointment, Rachel immediately figured out what he meant. She hid her hand behind her back and said, "No, thanks. I'll take care of it myself."

'He wants to apply the ointment for me? I'd rather go back to the Sue Garden in pain! Who knows if he's going to hurt me again if I said something that might irritate him again?

While those thoughts were on her mind, Rachel felt a sharp pain coming from her wrist. Victor frowned as he tightened his grip on the tube of ointment. He was visibly displeased by the fact that Rachel refused his help. "Give me your hand," he said, trying to be patient. Rachel was about to refuse, but Victor seemed to have guessed what she would say. "Give me your hand or I'll break it for you. It'll save us both the trouble." Once more, she fell silent, 'What a blatant threat!' Rachel looked into his eyes, and realized that Victor was really going to do it. 'This bastard had threatened to break my legs. There's no doubt that he'll break my wrist!' After a moment of hesitation, she gave him her right hand, Victor held her wrist. It was at this moment that he felt how slender, and soft her wrist was. As he clenched her wrist, he felt as if there was only a thin layer of skin wrapped around her bones. She was quite thin. In addition, her skin was fair, and the veins were visible under her skin. While he was holding her hand, he could feel her trembling. This was the human body's instinctive reaction to danger. To Rachel, Victor was dangerous. Upon realizing this, he felt a surge of

pain strike his heart. Rachel stared at her wrist, fearing that he would break her wrist all of a sudden. Perhaps due to how nervous she felt, her whole body was tense, and her left hand on the sofa was now clenched into a fist.

Right now, she was like a hedgehog in a defensive state. Victor dipped a cotton swab into the ointment and gently applied it onto her wrist. When the ointment touched her skin, the coldness of the paste slowly dissipated the burning pain. Without them realizing, the tense atmosphere between them had now disappeared. Aside from the sound of their breathing, the room was awfully quiet. As a matter of fact, it looked harmonious. Victor was sitting on the tea table. He was holding her wrist with one hand, and using his other hand to apply the ointment on her. The aisle between the table and the sofa was only one arm wide, so they were sitting very close to each other. Rachel could see his facial features clearly right now. His eyelashes were thick and long. This was the first time that she realized that a man's eyelashes could be so beautiful. 'They look great,' she thought to herself. While she was lost in thought, Rachel didn't notice that she was leaning towards Victor. Suddenly, she noticed that he was looking back at her. Rachel was stunned when she saw her own reflection in his deep eyes. As Victor stared into her eyes, he couldn't help but think of the way Rachel looked at him with hatred. Subconsciously, his eyes fell on her pink, supple lips. She wasn't wearing any lipstick, but her lips were pink. Their beauty rivaled that of a budding flower, and they looked softer than jelly. 'Are they as soft as they look?' he wondered. All of a sudden, Rachel noticed the way he was looking at her. She quickly came to her senses and realized that they were too close right now. She sat upright, and distanced herself from him as much as possible. But as soon as she leaned back, he pulled her forward. A shadow loomed over her all of a sudden. "Hmpf!" Victor kissed her passionately. Rachel's eyes widened, and her pupils dilated in shock. It felt like her brain was buzzing.

## Captivation: Want Nothing But You Chapter 135

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### **Chapter 135 Victor Kissed Her**

'Victor just kissed me! Why did he do that? How dare he kiss me?' Everything happened so fast that Rachel couldn't react. She instinctively wanted to push him away, but it seemed that he felt she was struggling to break free, so he quickly grabbed her arms, and put them behind her back to prevent her from moving. Rachel could not make him budge, so it infuriated her. Unable to do anything else, she bit him. Victor felt the searing pain from his lip, and groaned. His heart raced when he saw the way her eyes became bloodshot with anger. It was at that moment when he realized what he had done to her. Just now, he couldn't resist the urge to kiss her. What surprised him even more was the fact that he couldn't control himself around her. The moment he kissed her, his self-control, which he had always been proud of, was torn apart.

He knew that Rachel didn't want him, and it displeased him to know that. Victor even did

everything he could to stop her from resisting. 'What the hell has gotten into me? I should be angry, and staying as far away as I can from this woman as possible! Subconsciously, his eyes fell on her lips. She bit him so hard just now that his lips were now bleeding, and some of his blood had stained her own lips. But for some reason, it made her all the more attractive to him.

Her lips were supple, and had a faint taste of fruit. His Adam's apple bobbed up and down, and he could feel himself being aroused. He knew exactly what this feeling was. Victor's eyes dimmed as he tried to avert his gaze from her lips. Meanwhile, Rachel was heavily panting. 'What the hell was he trying to do with me? Why the fuck did he kiss me?' "Let me go!" she said, struggling to break free, regardless of how painful her wrist was. Victor's fingertips were still moist from the ointment he had applied on her wrist a while ago. The paste hadn't completely been absorbed yet. Finally, he decided to let her go. The second that he did, Rachel immediately propped herself up and backed away from him. When he saw her reaction, his face turned grim. Although there was no noticeable emotion

on his face, the atmosphere became tense within the blink of an eye. 'She's disgusted of me? How dare she? If there's someone who's supposed to be disgusted, it should be me!' Chaotic thoughts raised through his mind, and they further served to infuriate him. A sardonic smile appeared on his lips as he said, "Rachel, you once tried so hard to climb into my bed and have my child, but now you're acting all innocent and chaste?" 1 'Nothing good ever comes out of a scumbag's mouth!' Rachel exclaimed in her head. 'This bastard has no bottom line whatsoever! He always feels like he has the moral high ground! Rachel could smell the faint odor of blood on her lips. She used her finger to wipe it away, and said to him, "Sorry, but a stupid dog bit me earlier. I haven't gotten vaccinated for rabies yet, so please stay away from me. Otherwise, I might go crazy and attack you." 1 Victor was displeased to hear that. 'Is she calling me a dog?' A sarcastic smile formed on Rachel's lips. When she thought of what she had suffered through tonight, she could no longer hold back her anger. "Getting laid for a divorced man is quite difficult nowadays, I see," she said sarcastically. "I didn't expect you'd be so thirsty for sex that you'd even kiss your ex-wife just to relieve your desire!" Victor fell silent. His eyes became fierce, and veins bulged on his temples. Moments later, the air in the room seem to have dropped several degrees. "Get out!" he growled. Without hesitation, Rachel turned around and left. Victor was left sitting there in silence with a complicated expression on his face. He didn't even glance at his stomach medicine until he heard the door close. Right now, his stomach was aching horribly. What happened just now had distracted him from the pain. And now that he was focused on himself, the pain was magnified. Soon, beads of sweat formed on his forehead, and his face turned pale. While he was in pain, his phone began to ring. He glanced at the caller ID before answering it and putting the caller on speaker. "What?" Victor groaned. "Mr.



Sullivan, will you and Miss Bennet be coming home tonight?" asked Lukas. He clenched the medicine bottle, and after a moment of silence, he answered, "I'll come home later." "Very well, sir. I'll heat up the soup in the kitchen." Having said that, Lukas added, "Miss Bennet told us to prepare the hangover soup before she went out, so that you can have some as soon as you come home." 'Hangover soup?' From the corner of Victor's eyes, he saw the glass on the ground. "Did you say that she told you to prepare it?" "Indeed, sir." Lukas felt like something was amiss with Victor when he answered. After all, he had been there for him ever since Victor was a little boy. Even if Victor wasn't in front of him, Lukas could tell from his voice that something was off.

Worried that something was bothering Victor, Lukas asked, "Mr. Sullivan, are you alright?" Victor got up and sat on the sofa. He leaned back, put one hand on his abdomen, and tried to alleviate his pain by pressing on it. In a casual voice, he replied, "It's just a minor stomachache." It was just as Lukas had expected. "Did you take any medicine with you, sir? There are some in Miss Bennet's car. Before she went out, I told her to bring some along, but I don't know if she forgot to do so." 'So... it really was Lukas who told her about my gastrointestinal problems, and my medications,' Victor said to himself.

"I have them with me right here," he said to Lukas. There was no emotion in the way he spoke. "That's good to know, sir." Lukas breathed a sigh of relief. "Sir, you haven't suffered through gastrointestinal problems in a long time. Should I call a doctor over to do a quick examination on you?" Victor fell silent for a second before he responded, "Let's talk about that later." After disconnecting from the call, Victor glanced down at the medicine bottle, took out two white flat pills and ingested them. The medicine wasn't coated in any sugar, so the second it touched the tip of his tongue, he tasted the bitterness of the pills. Once he had adapted to the bitter taste, he swallowed the medicine. Then, he closed his eyes, and remembered Lukas' and Dwayne's words; their voices rang through his ears. In that moment, Victor felt as though the warmth of Rachel's lips was still on his. Deep in his heart, it seemed like something was changing. Once more, his phone began to ring.

This time, without opening his eyes, he answered the phone. In the clear empty room, Carson's voice resonated. "Hey, buddy! Are you still alive?" Victor was at a loss for words. Right now, Carson was lying in bed in his own home. His head was resting atop his arm, and he looked perfectly relaxed. "Well, you're still able to answer your phone, so I'm assuming

you're still okay." "Cut the crap." Victor had lost his patience, and his face displayed just how irritated he was. "You're quite ungrateful, aren't you? I just saved your life, man!" Almost as if Carson was courting death, he added, "Although I didn't come to see you in person, I made sure to send someone very special in my stead." Upon hearing that, Victor's mouth twitched. After a long and eerie silence, he said in an obviously annoyed voice, "You told her that I was here." The way he spoke was not a form of questioning, but a statement. Carson

chuckled. "Hey, I was busy, okay? I couldn't come, so I thought the only other person who could possibly help you would've been Rachel." . But in reality, he just wanted to have some fun. Before Victor could respond, Carson asked, "Are you two okay?" Since he didn't receive any response from Victor, he asked, "Hello?" It was then that Victor hung up on him. 'I've misunderstood her yet again,' he thought to himself. A frown appeared on his face. He had already known that he had misunderstood her when he saw the medicine, but he was too proud to admit that he was wrong. In his mind, two halves of himself argued with each other.