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"Did you call me just to say this?" Ashlyn replied coldly.

"Mr. Haddock invited our whole family to a meal tomorrow, and you need to show up. If you don't, we'll stir up trouble in your hospital and interfere with your work," Horace yelled angrily.

Ashlyn responded with an impatient tone, "Is this really how you're inviting me to a meal?"

"Mr. Haddock has his ways of making you show up if you don't attend the meal tomorrow." Horace hung up immediately after that.

Ashlyn watched as her phone's screen turned dark as she put her phone away.

Why is Dixon suddenly in good terms with Horace again?

Why did he invite the Berry family to a meal?

Something very weird is going on.

Just as she was lost in thought, Harrison sent a message to her.

"Boss, it's from the Haddock Group."

No wonder.

A hint of derision flashed in Ashlyn's eyes as she replied, "Keep a close eye on the Haddock Group and Berry Furnishings. Report to me if you see anything suspicious."

"Alright."

"Don't be sad." A man's warm and alluring voice suddenly sounded in her ear.

After which, a warm hand caressed the back of her hands which felt a little cold.

Ashlyn was at a loss for words.

What do you mean by saying don't be sad?

She looked up in confusion and saw that Lucas was staring at her with a sentimental gaze.

His gaze was also laced with a hint of passionate desire.

“What do you mean ‘don’t be sad’?” Ashlyn wanted to break free from his clasp.

However, Lucas held on even tighter, and she couldn’t free herself no matter how hard she tried.

“I will take care of you from now on. Those people are not important.”

A ray of warm sunlight was cast on Lucas’ face through the car’s window, and it illuminated his warm and affectionate expression.

Unbeknownst to her, the sun was already setting.

Lucas extended his other hand and caressed her soft cheeks tenderly as he beamed brightly.

“Honey, I know that I was in the wrong for neglecting you. I will give you all my love and affection from now on. I can give you everything you want, and I will even sacrifice my life for you if you want me to.”

Ashlyn’s lips fluttered slightly, yet she couldn’t speak as a sudden dryness permeated in her throat.

Lucas approached her slowly and planted a tender kiss on her cheek.

“D-Don’t say something so cheesy.”

Despite her words, Ashlyn’s heart raced as her face started to blush as if it was scalded by the kiss.

Lucas clasped her chin and wrapped his other arm around her waist. He then placed his lips on her ears and whispered, “Really? I don’t find it cheesy because I meant everything I said.”

Under the shimmer of the sunset, Ashlyn’s pretty face was illuminated in a scarlet hue, and she looked rather enticing.

Meanwhile, the man’s masculine scent permeated her senses, and her heart started to race uncontrollably again.

Lucas’ defined features twisted slightly to show a naughty smile before he grabbed her by the wrist and pulled her towards his arms.

Using the momentum from the action, he then pressed Ashlyn onto the seat of the car.

His chest was as hard as rock, and Ashlyn felt her sense of smell faltering due to the familiar yet overwhelming hormonal scent.

She urgently pushed back on his chest and shrieked, “Lucas, what are you doing?”

He inspected the blushing woman closely from above as he replied, “I want to kiss you.”

IN the meantime, Spencer knowingly raised the privacy barrier.

I'm very aware whenever Mr. Nolan wants to engage in 'those' activities!

After all, I don't want to be constantly reminded by the passionate scene that I am still a bachelor.

Lucas lips came down slowly on Ashlyn's rosy and tender lips.

Her unique fragrance was addicting and alluring.

After some time, the car stopped slowly, and Ashlyn pushed Lucas away harshly.

Her beautiful features were accentuated with streaks of red.

"Did you have some candy just now?" Lucas nuzzled Ashlyn's forehead gently as he said with a sensual voice.

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"What candy?" Ashlyn was confused.

"Why do you taste so sweet then? I wanna have another taste." Lucas' lips curled into a slight smile and Ashlyn's face turned completely red once again.

Sweet? Seriously?

"Gosh, this is so cheesy!" Ashlyn had an urge to scour her arms to rid herself of the goosebumps caused by Lucas' words.

Meanwhile, his expression darkened in frustration.

I researched on this topic for so long and chose a simple pick-up line, but she still is annoyed by it!

Those people on the internet blog really can't be trusted.

Lucas stared at Ashlyn for a long while before saying, "We've arrived."

As Ashlyn recovered from her shock, Lucas opened the car door and dragged her towards the villa.

On the other hand, Spencer held onto the groceries they bought just now.

As Lucas wrapped his warm hands around Ashlyn's with his lips were pressed together.

Meanwhile, Ashlyn tagged beside him as she stared at his handsome side profile from time to time.

I have to admit that this guy is really charming.

Especially his handsome face. Everyone would probably fall for someone as striking as him.

Because he's so handsome, he looks good in everything he wears.

He's just wearing a simple black shirt and a pair of ordinary black pants, yet he still looks so breathtaking good.

Ashlyn let her mind wander.

I'm relieved that the Spirogyra didn't act up lately.

As they stepped into the villa, they changed into a pair of more comfy shoes.

After which, Ashlyn headed straight into the kitchen in preparation to sate the man's appetite.

The dish she was making was grilled fish which was something she was familiar with.

Meanwhile, Lucas was in a daze as he stared at her in the kitchen with a phone in his hands.

Ashlyn thought that he was just fiddling around with his phone, so she didn't think much about it.

However, unbeknownst to her, Lucas was actually recording a video of her grilling the fish.

Only her slender and pale hands were in the video, yet Lucas still compressed and processed the video using an application.

He opened his Twitter and was greeted with gossip about how Ashlyn and he went to the mall again to buy fish.

Lucas flashed a slight smirk because he was quite pleased with the attention this piece of news gained.

He wanted to show everyone how loving they were and tell Ashlyn that she would forever hold a special place in his heart even after the divorce.

His possessiveness was overbearing and undeniable, and he wanted to own every part of Ashlyn.

The only woman who deserves to be Mrs. Nolan is Ashlyn, and I must announce to everyone!

I'll get rid of anyone who dares to lay their eyes on her!

He posted the video of Ashlyn's cooking on Twitter. Although only her hands could be seen, they were

undeniably svelte and was a testament to how beautiful their owner was.

“Damn! Mrs. Nolan’s hands are so beautiful!”

“Mr. Nolan posted so many Tweets today!”

“Besides that, every single Tweet is showing off their affection publicly!”

“Um... Mr. Nolan, did you get kidnapped? Is Mrs. Nolan blackmailing you? Reply here if that is the case.”

“Shameless promotion, ugh. I’m so tired of all this.”

“Did someone cast a voodoo spell on Lucas? This is so unlike him!”

All this happened behind Ashlyn’s back. She didn’t realize that the childish Lucas went on Twitter to display affection again.

She was his only regret, so he wanted to show everyone how loving they were in an act of defiance.

The more he yearned for her, the more he wanted to tell the whole world about it because he wanted to show Ashlyn how sincere his love for her was.

However, Ashlyn scrolled through Twitter casually as she took a bite of the grilled fish.

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After that, she made a comment that utterly shocked everyone.

“Lucas Nolan, you’re doomed the next time you dare to post videos and photos of me behind my back!”

She then put down her phone and continued to eat.

I’m so done with that man! He’s just like a teenager who likes to post everything on social media! Girls that age like to show off their luxury bags or makeup, but he’s showing me off instead!

How annoying can he get!

Thanks, but no thanks for that, Lucas!

The netizens quickly caught onto how threatening Mrs. Nolan’s comment was, and they were shocked beyond belief.

“Mrs. Nolan is probably the only one who dares to talk to Mr. Nolan like that...”

“Mr. Nolan, be prepared to sleep on the couch tonight.”

"Tsk tsk tsk..."

"Mrs. Nolan is so cool and stern!"

"She's such a queen."

However, Lucas didn't reply to her comment on Twitter. Instead, he put down his cutlery and stared at her intently. "Are you angry?"

"Lucas, can you not be so childish?" Ashlyn put down her cutlery too. "Aren't you supposed to be the high and mighty president of a company? Why are you ruining your own image like this?"

"Because of you. I'll do anything for your sake." Lucas cut a piece of fish for her. "Ashlyn, don't you dare try to leave me."

He was within spitting distance of her, so she felt a short of breath.

She didn't reply him anymore. Instead, she continued to eat her food.

"I won't do this anymore if you don't want me to post your pictures." Lucas was worried that Ashlyn was angry because she kept quiet.

Didn't those online articles say that all ladies like to be showed off online because it makes them feel desired?

Geez. I fell for it again. Damn it!

Ashlyn felt a little uncomfortable because of how anxious he sounded even though he was usually quite pompous.

Isn't he usually very domineering and haughty?

Why is he so meek now?

He even offered to change his behavior!

She was not used to Lucas' change in behavior.

Actually, she wasn't really affected by Lucas' Tweets because her face wasn't shown.

However, it would be a different story if her appearance were revealed.

We're already divorced, but he's still clinging onto me like some fly! He keeps showing me off like I'm

still Mrs. Nolan.

Let's just hope that no one will find out who I am. It would be disastrous if they did.

She sighed and declared, "Lucas, we are never getting back together, so please don't do something that childish again."

"Can't we still be friends?" Lucas cocked his eyebrows as his expression darkened.

He couldn't help but feel frustrated, and he clenched his fists tightly to resist the urge to yell and break something.

"Lucas, no means no." Ashlyn looked up at him.

She didn't continue to eat anymore. Instead, she wiped her red lips with two napkins and walked away with her bag.

However, just as she turned around, a sudden surge of heat permeated through every cell of her body.

The Spirogyra finally acted up once more after a long period of dormancy.

Her body temperature started to fluctuate, and in response, her face flushed both red and white.

She held her breath with all her might as she tried to take a step forward.

However, this Spirogyra outburst was more severe than ever before, and the pain seeped through every single vein in her. The Spirogyra lashed at every cell of hers, and it made her feel like thousands of tiny needles were stabbing at her from within.

She took a deep breath and tried to move her feet which felt as heavy as bricks at the moment.

Her vision suddenly blurred because every step she took was just like treading on a field of daggers.

Every inch of her body ached as though she had been hit by a car as she shuffled slowly towards the exit.

Her entire body was drenched in sweat as she finally reached the outside, and she frantically searched for her phone in her purse.

After that, she forced herself to call Jared. "Hello, Boss." "Come and pick me up," Ashlyn uttered feebly as she was about to lose consciousness at any moment.

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The flame that burned within her and the overwhelming yet familiar desire eroding her senses kept reminding her of what she truly needed.

But I don't want to eat my own words!

I just told him that we are never getting back together, and now the Spirogyra is forcing me to go to him.

Even so, her dignity and force of character refused to let that happen, even though she might be tormented to death by the Spirogyra.

She made up her mind that she would resist the Spirogyra till the very end.

Jared could sense something was amiss, so he asked, "Boss, what happened? Where are you? Send me your location."

Ashlyn bit her lip as her cheeks burned up in a crimson hue.

With her trembling hands, she grabbed onto the phone and replied, "I-I'm at the Whitland Villa."

Suddenly, the rumbling of thunder could be heard as a bolt of lightning tore through the night sky.

Under the sudden flash of light, Ashlyn's reddened face seemed nightmarish yet breathtaking.

At that moment, her striking features made her look like a mythical yet dangerous creature of the night.

It's about to rain.

Ashlyn instinctively trudged forwards as she tried to look for a gazebo for shelter against the rain.

The villa was well furnished, and usually, the small streams and greenery formed a picturesque scene.

Trying her best to cope with the overwhelming pain and desire, she forced herself to move forward despite the burning sensation between her thighs.

Every single cell in her body screamed, "I want him, I want him..."

"No, no..." Ashlyn tried to brainwash herself to counteract the Spirogyra's wheedling.

Soon, five minutes had passed, yet she only took three steps forwards.

She never knew that walking would be a form of torture until now.

Suddenly, the rolling clouds from above unleashed a torrent of rainfall which pattered mercilessly on her body.

Ashlyn closed her eyes and thought, "Damn it! How unlucky can I get! I'll be drenched if I don't get some

shelter now!”

Meanwhile, in the villa, Spencer washed the dishes as he took a worried look at the downpour.

It’s raining cats and dogs!

He observed Lucas’ expression and said cautiously, “Is Ms. Berry able to hail a cab?”

The overwhelming darkness seemed to have engulfed the entire city, and the svelte figure of an attractive lady standing alone in the rain might invite some unwanted advances.

Ashlyn stared at the rain-soaked sky as she fought with the Spirogyra that was causing unrest within her.

Her heart raced, and her body was in so much pain she felt like she was going to explode.

“Ashlyn... haven’t you given up yet?”

Suddenly, a ghastly voice rang in her ear.

She looked up abruptly and saw a tall, masculine figure wearing a silver mask.

A pair of devilish eyes was concealed behind the mask, and it shimmered menacingly in contempt.

It was as if the man viewed himself as an omnipotent figure.

Just then, a lightning strike ripped through the night sky and illuminated his horrifying silver mask.

He’s here. The masked man is here again.

Four years ago, a masked man cornered Ashlyn with a thousand people and forcibly planted the Spirogyra into her.

Ashlyn stared at the harrowing face and tried to calm herself down. I don’t know if this man is the masked man from four years ago.

“Who are you? Who the hell are you?”

Despite her cries, the man just stood a few steps away from her nonchalantly.

She was in so much pain she was about to go insane, and her pupils dilated and contracted at random as a result.

However, her twisted expression was an entertaining sight to the masked man.

“I really pity you! How can a pretty lady like you be in so much pain?”

The man chuckled in a guttural voice that one might hear from the depths of hell, and it sent a chill down her spine.

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Judging by his familiar voice and contemptuous expression, Ashlyn was sure that the man in front of her was the same man who planted the Spirogyra in her four years ago.

With a healthy gait, the man strode towards Ashlyn slowly.

Ashlyn was subdued by the Spirogyra attack, so she was no match for the man.

Instinctively, she backed away as he said in a low and icy voice, “Woman, I thought that you would come looking for me and beg for mercy... but I never thought that you would marry that man for four years. Look what happened now? Haha, you’re divorced now, and you even try to cut off all contact with him. You have really disappointed me. Maybe... I can help you put an end to all this?”

Ashlyn clenched her fists as she replied in an equally icy tone, “What do you want from me? Lucas and I are already divorced, and we have nothing to do with each other anymore.”

“Really?” The man’s gaze was mystifying as he stared at Ashlyn’s furiously flushing face. “I see... Haha...”

After a short pause, he declared, “That’d better be the case. If not, I can’t guarantee that he might continue to exist in this world.”

“You!”

Under the illumination of the streetlights, the masked man seemed horrifying, yet he had an ambiguous quality to him.

Ashlyn stared at him in silence, and she could clearly sense the murderous intent emanating from him.

“You can just kill me if you want to. Why go through all this trouble?”

I don’t understand why he didn’t do anything to me even after he planted the Spirogyra in me!

The man stared intently at her and said, “Do you know how bad it feels to have someone I fancy taken away from me?”

A sardonic smile appeared on his lips as he suddenly stroked her cheeks.

“You want to do it, right? Why not come to me? Huh?”

The man's voice sounded oddly alluring.

Even so, Ashlyn replied coldly, "I'm not interested in you."

At the same time, the pain and discomfort she felt assaulted her mercilessly as her desire boiled over.

However, when the man stroked her face, she felt her pain alleviate.

Because of that, she gaped in shock at him.

Spirogyra was a bizarre parasite. It had the ability to recognize blood types, and it preferred rare blood types over common ones. If it came into contact with a common blood type, it would be sent into unrest.

Incidentally, Lucas' blood type was Rh negative, and that was one of the reasons why Ashlyn married him.

The Spirogyra adored Lucas' touch because it loved his blood, so Ashlyn thought to herself, "Don't tell me this man is Rh negative too?"

Ashlyn forcefully bit down on her lips because she didn't want to feel any pleasure from the Spirogyra coming in contact with the man.

I will defeat it... I can do it!

I must not give up!

Although she was divorced with Lucas, she still didn't want to sleep with any other man except for him.

No! I can't give up!

The man cast her a lustful and maniacal gaze as he smirked. "You're a stubborn one!"

Ashlyn replied with silence as the rain became heavier.

She stood motionless just like a statue as a Bentley drove out slowly from the garage.

"Mr. Nolan, Ms. Berry is there!" Spencer said softly.

Lucas stared outside the car window and closed his eyes shortly after as a blankness suddenly manifested in his mind for a few moments.

After that, he clenched his fists tightly to suppress the rage boiling within him.

What he saw was Ashlyn and a man staring at each other under the dim streetlights in the heavy rain.

One moment passed, then two... as the man reached out and caressed her cheeks, yet she still remained motionless.

Lucas' body tensed up abruptly as an overwhelming pain engulfed him.

Ashlyn Berry! I was so stupid to come out for you! You really are surrounded by men, huh? You're even acting so intimately with another guy at a time like this!

His body temperature plummeted as though he was submerged in ice cold water.

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The rain was still pouring as Ashlyn blinked and forcefully rubbed her hands together. Green veins started to show at the back hand of her pale hands.

The Spirogyra attack was subsiding slowly, and she slapped the man's hand away. "Don't touch me!"

"You are feisty!" The man's expression was lustful yet morose. "You will cry and beg me someday. You will beg for me to f*** you."

His desire to conquer her was as clear as crystal.

On the other hand, Ashlyn was revolted by his disgusting words.

"Never. That day will never come!"

"Haha, let's just see what happens then." The man looked up and saw Lucas, who just got off the Bentley.

The man squinted menacingly at Lucas, and Lucas barked, "Are you so desperate to meet your lover?"

Lucas targeted the question at Ashlyn, before casting his gaze on the masked man.

An uncanny feeling of familiarity suddenly struck him, and he gaped in shock.

"Your ex-husband is here! It looks like he still can't move on from you!" The man laughed and gave Lucas a contemptuous glance before turning around and leaving.

Ashlyn felt her entire body relaxing the moment the man left.

However, as she loosened her grip, the overwhelming pain assaulted her once again.

Through the blur of the rain, Ashlyn could see a tall figure shuffling towards her in the dark.

He stared at her pale complexion and raised his hand as his temples pulsed in pain.

Emotions toiled in his heart, yet his striking face showed no sign of it.

The rain continued to pour heavily as Ashlyn slowly closed her eyes, her consciousness slipping away.

Lucas watched as she faltered and subconsciously reached out to break her fall.

The woman's feeble voice made its way through the pattering of the rain and reached Lucas. "Lucas... can I trust you?"

"Ashlyn? Ashlyn?"

Lucas, who was drenched completely, carried her into villa.

Spencer hurried towards them too as he passed Lucas some fresh towels.

Lucas placed Ashlyn on the bed and wrapped her tightly with the towels.

He only let go of her once he felt her body warming up once again.

Spencer walked out from the bathroom and said, "Mr. Nolan, the bathtub is ready."

"Alright." Lucas carried Ashlyn into the bathroom and closed the door with a thud.

Meanwhile, Spencer knowingly left the room.

Lucas didn't understand why she suddenly fell unconscious when she seemed so healthy just now.

The rage and suffocating feeling he felt when he saw the masked man stroking her cheeks faded completely the moment she fainted.

In the bathtub, the woman's body temperature fluctuated as her face flushed red and then turned white.

Is she having a fever?

But that doesn't seem likely because her body is as cold as ice after a while.

Suddenly, Lucas remembered that time when Jared called to him that Ashlyn needed him, and his heart sank.

What secret is Ashlyn keeping from me?

He asked a private doctor to come and check on Ashlyn. As the doctor ran his tests, Lucas stared at him anxiously.

“Mr. Nolan, something very unusual is happening to this lady. She needs to be hospitalized and observed.”

“What did you just say?” Lucas’ striking features were still laced with rain water as he contorted his face in rage.

The doctor cowered slightly and replied, “Her disease seems unusual to me. The hospital needs to run some tests to find out what it is.”

“Get lost! What a useless doctor!” Lucas barked.

She has always been so healthy, how can she suddenly have some weird disease?

Does this doctor even know how to do his job?

The doctor was shocked, and he left in a hurry because he was merely a doctor who couldn’t disobey Lucas.

The moment the doctor left, the doorbell rang.

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Jared barged in while completely drenched. “Is Ashlyn here?”

He had searched the entire Whitland Villa, but he couldn’t find Ashlyn anywhere.

Since she had asked him to come and fetch her, he naturally couldn’t leave on his own.

Jared already checked with the guardhouse; Ashlyn hadn’t left the villa.

“She’s here,” Lucas stated, pursing his lips and staring at Jared coldly.

Jared was brought to the bedroom two minutes later.

His eyes instantly reddened when he saw a pale-looking Ashlyn lying on the huge, soft bed.

The man hurriedly walked over and held Ashlyn’s hand.

Her fluctuating body temperature terrified him.

“You have a very... close relationship with her now; do you know what sickness she has?” Lucas asked,

gritting his teeth.

He could only suppress his jealousy if he wanted to find out more about Ashlyn's condition.

His heart felt as though it was bleeding.

Jared turned and quietly stared at Lucas.

He didn't know whether to reveal his boss' secret.

However, the Spirogyra inside the woman was like a ticking bomb.

It could kill her anytime.

Seeing Ashlyn die was the last thing Jared wanted.

I don't know what Grandpa said to her before he died, but Ashlyn is an older sister to me. She took me to Shadow Way, nurtured me and made me her right-hand man. It's all thanks to her that I've become who I am today.

She let Jonathan do what he wanted to stop him from spiraling into darkness.

She's always watched over both of us.

It's probably time I repaid her.

"Have you ever heard of this poison?" Jared's emotionless voice resonated in the room.

"What?"

Lucas clenched his fists in shock.

He really knows what's wrong with Ashlyn.

Lucas' heart was filled with agony. Was he and Ashlyn always meant to be familiar strangers?

He seemed to not know anything about the woman.

"There's a poison called Spirogyra—perhaps you can call it a parasite too. There isn't a cure for it. The moment a Spirogyra finds a host, it remains until the host dies. It will torment its host's willpower and body, and it craves the blood of the opposite sex. It gains its nutrients from the blood that is sweet and rare, which is obtained when a man and a woman engage in the highest level of intimacy."

Lucas' face remained frigid and contained not a hint of warmth.

His gaze darkened as he stared at Jared's expressionless face.

The sharp, agonizing pain returned to his temples, tormenting his nerves.

Lucas suddenly understood why Jared had called him previously.

It was because the Spirogyra had attacked once again and wanted Lucas' RH negative blood.

The man clenched his fists so hard that his knuckles turned pale. His heart didn't hurt as much initially, but he now felt as though it had been completely smashed to pieces; he felt utterly defeated.

It took almost all his energy to respond hoarsely, "So I'm the temporary cure to her Spirogyra, and... The marriage four years ago was just a way for her to delay the effects of the poison?"

Jared continued to stare at him emotionlessly, but this time, a look of pain flashed in the former's eyes for a brief moment. "Your intelligence truly is astounding, Mr. Nolan. Your encounter with each other at the hospital entrance was no coincidence. It was all perfectly planned out. She was looking for someone to marry and relieve her of her suffering, so she searched and scoured desperately... and finally chose you."

The room instantly fell silent.

All that could be heard were the sounds of rain from outside the window, as well as Lucas' heavy breathing.

Feeling despaired, Lucas curled his lips into a faint smile and remarked frostily, "All these years, I thought I was the one in control... Who would've thought that everything has actually been in the palm of her hand? She played me well, and now, she's going to cast me aside. You're incredible, Ashlyn."

It's all nothing but a huge lie.

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"So is the masked guy or someone else her next subject? Is that why she can't wait to get on with the divorce?" Lucas remained standing there, breathing erratically.

"No. It's because the Spirogyra became increasingly inactive. It hadn't flared up for a long time, which is why she immediately agreed when you brought up the divorce. She thought the parasite was no longer a threat, but it began to relapse frequently after the divorce."

Pale yellow sun rays shone on Lucas' face. "I guess I should be thankful that she put so much effort into marrying me," he remarked sarcastically.

"The parasite's attacking again today. Either you save her or you don't. The decision rests in your

hands," Jared said with a hint of exhaustion. "I'm telling you this because I don't want it to flare up. She... she gets tormented so badly every time it does. I don't want to see her in such a state."

"You must love her so much that you're willingly handing her over to another man," Lucas sneered.

He couldn't accept the fact that he had never known about Ashlyn's huge secret until now.

What he refused to accept even more was the fact that Ashlyn had actually plotted to marry him. The man used to think she was just a bird locked in a cage; who knew he was actually the one dancing in the palm of her hand?

Who on earth was the one behind the schemes? Who was the mastermind?

All he felt was heartache.

"You've known her for a long time, right? Way before I married her?"

"Yes," Jared said nothing more. At this point, having Ashlyn remain by Lucas' side was the best option.

He left the room, leaving Ashlyn and Lucas on their own.

Lucas stared at the woman on the bed. Despite being unconscious, she looked as divine as usual.

Her cheeks were an alluring shade of red.

Lucas stood beside the bed, looking like a lost child.

She stayed with me just to prolong her lifespan.

The man's heart was filled with pain and bitterness.

His ears were buzzing, and his emotions were a mess.

He shut his eyelids for a moment and then opened them to reveal a pair of frosty eyes.

Lucas felt like a wandering soul, not knowing where to go.

After a long while, the woman on the bed suddenly began to tug at her own clothes and curl up into a ball. "No!" she groaned in pain.

"Don't!"

The anguish in her voice was overwhelming.

Beads of sweat dripped down her forehead as her face paled and burned.

“Stop!”

She continued to resist and defend herself.

It felt as if she was having a long nightmare. In her dream, the masked man was threatening her, but she violently shoved him away.

“Don’t come near me! Don’t come over... Go away!”

Her voice was extremely raspy.

She was so weak that she could barely talk.

Lucas stood before her, staring at her while feeling conflicted as she struggled in pain.

He never knew how the Spirogyra could do such a thing to a cold and proud woman like her, reducing her to such a sorry state.

Feeling extremely complicated, he didn’t know what to do at this point.

Is she always like this every time it breaks out?

She’s lost her senses. Her thoughts are colliding. She’s in so much pain.

Her pajamas that she had just changed into were now drenched in sweat. She looked like she had just been lifted out of a pool of water.

Yet, her tender body looked fatally attractive to Lucas.

He wanted to resist.

He didn’t want any intimacy of that sort.

Nevertheless, that body was showing such intense reactions.

Who is she thinking about?

Who is she asking to go away?

Is it me—her ex-husband?

“Lucas has RH negative blood too! He’ll save me... Get away from me!” Ashlyn suddenly yelled.

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It seemingly took all of Ashlyn’s energy to say that.

After screaming, she lay in bed unmoving, as though she had passed out once again.

Lucas stared at Ashlyn’s pale face, his eyes narrowing.

What did she just say?

She was calling out to me!

She’s waiting for me.

His heart pounded wildly; it was about to leap out of his chest.

Unable to control himself any longer, he pressed his lips against Ashlyn’s.

An indescribable wave of passion filled the room.

Two hours later, Lucas walked into the bathroom, all drenched in sweat.

Ashlyn’s body temperature had regulated, and her cheeks were no longer red. All that remained were the traces of their intimacy.

She was back to normal.

Lucas carried her in his arms, cleaned her up briefly, and placed her back on the bed.

He also changed the bedsheets and blanket—all by himself.

The sheets were completely soaked, just like when her Spirogyra flared up at Bayview Villa.

He didn’t understand any of this back then, but he did now.

Is there really no cure?

Lucas whipped out his phone and dialed a number.

Late at night in New York, Sinclair was fast asleep with a blonde beauty in his arms.

Upon hearing his ringtone, he furiously grabbed his phone. “You’d better have a good reason for calling,

or else—”

“Or else what?” An icy voice cut him off before he could finish.

Sinclair instantly felt as though someone had splashed a bucket of cold water over him, and his tiredness quickly faded away. “Is that you, Lucas? What’s going on? Did your condition get worse?”

Lucas sounded frosty as usual. “There’s something I want to ask you.”

“Oh my God!” Sinclair exclaimed five minutes later. “It’s real? I thought it only existed in medical records. I never expected it to happen in real life.”

“You know about the Spirogyra?” Lucas’ eyes narrowed.

Sinclair pushed his woman aside and sat up. “I may be a specialist in the field of psychology, Lucas, but I’ve also heard of certain rare diseases. I once read about this parasite, but there seems to be no cure for it, unfortunately.”

“I need a cure, Sinclair. You’re the only one who can help me.” Lucas stood lazily by the window, looking handsome while holding his phone and dressed in a black shirt. His eyes looked extremely cold.

Rain fell heavily outside the window, seemingly beating down on his heart.

“I’ll have to consult my seniors or teachers, Lucas. They might have a clue. I’ll call you once I get any information on this,” said Lucas after a long pause. “But I hope you don’t harbor any expect—”

“I know, but I’ll try to save her in every way I can.”

Lucas hung up.

His gaze deepened as he stared at Ashlyn through the glass door of the veranda.

After a long while, he took out a pure handmade cigar from a wooden box and held it in one hand. A lighter was in the other.

A blue flame emerged once the lighter was ignited.

At that very moment, Ashlyn caught sight of the man’s charming face.

Everything about his features was stunning and masculine.

However, those eyes of his contained not a single trace of warmth.

He was like a demon from Hell, cold and mighty.

Lucas puffed on the cigar, letting the smoke surround him.

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Ashlyn scanned the room, soon realizing that this was the bedroom she had once slept in for the past four years.

Did Lucas bring me back here?

Memories started flooding back to her.

The powerful masked man and the incredibly jealous Lucas...

Ashlyn's head began to hurt.

Her body felt refreshed, but the soreness reminded her of the times she had slept with Lucas in the past.

Did we just do it again?

The answer was obvious.

Yet, why does Lucas look so grim as always?

Ashlyn sat up and wanted to speak, only to realize that her throat didn't allow her to.

With a frown, she scanned the room and noticed a glass of water on the bedside table.

She gulped the water down immediately.

The feeling of the fluids flowing down her dry throat was akin to having a river in the middle of a desert.

By the time Ashlyn gulped down her water, Lucas had already stubbed out his cigar. He opened the glass door and walked in, gazing down at her.

The man had a light tobacco scent on him.

Throughout their four years of marriage, Ashlyn had never seen him smoke.

This was the first time.

Just as she felt puzzled, Lucas spoke up in a clear but slightly distant tone. "More water?"

Ashlyn bit her lip. "One more glass."

The man took her glass, refilled it with water, and handed it back to her.

As he leaned over, the scent of tobacco from his breath fell on Ashlyn's forehead.

Her lashes quivered as she took the glass.

While drinking, she couldn't help but glance at the man.

His pupils looked especially gloomy as the light shone on his dashing, sculpture-like face.

There was also a chilling look in his eyes that could send shivers down one's spine.

Suddenly, Ashlyn's belly began to hurt as she felt something warm and familiar flow out of her body.

Crap! I'm early again.

Her cycle had always been irregular ever since she had been infected with the Spirogyra.

Ashlyn put the glass down and instinctively got off the bed.

Using his strong hands, Lucas firmly grabbed her shoulders and forced her back in place.

"Where do you think you're going?" the handsome man asked menacingly.

Ashlyn grew frantic. It's flowing out even more!

She could clearly feel the fluid oozing out and making her pants damp.

She'd surely break down if she didn't hurry to the bathroom.

"Let go of me," Ashlyn insisted. "I have to use the bathroom."

"Are you really just going to the bathroom?" Lucas glared at her with his hawk-like eyes, causing her to tense up and turn pale.

The man let out a snicker. This woman has run off way too many times.

Ashlyn gritted her teeth. It didn't take a genius to realize that her pants were definitely soaked by now.

"Let go of me, you idiot!"

Her belly felt increasingly awful. She struggled to break free, not bothering to argue with the man.

Her struggling made Lucas gulp.

The moment Ashlyn tilted her head, Lucas swiftly nibbled on her earlobe, rubbing his nose against her ear.

“I won’t let you run off again, Honey.” His voice carried a dangerous tone.

Ashlyn turned as white as a sheet.

Sweat began to form on the tip of her nose.

“Let go of me, Lucas! It... It’s that time of the month for me.”

Lucas raised an eyebrow. “Don’t play any tricks with me,” he warned.

His voice was deep and seductive.

Ashlyn had just recovered from the Spirogyra’s torment, so she was utterly frail.

“Let go!” she groaned, suppressing the urge to give Lucas a kick.

Seeing how increasingly pale and frantic Ashlyn looked, Lucas squinted and finally let go of her.

Ashlyn immediately made a beeline for the bathroom and slammed the door.