

Her Riches 131

Chapter 131

Meanwhile, at the hospital, Maverick was lying in bed, his lips curling into a smirk as he watched the live broadcast on the television across the room.

So, it looks like she's decided to reveal one of her alter egos after so long.

The broadcast was done to inform everyone that even Treyton and Joaquin were more than happy to let her have the spotlight.

Samantha and Dexter must be extremely anxious right now. I bet they're scrambling to uncover her real identity.

A corner of his lips lifted into a smile as he gazed at the stunning woman speaking on live television. She might never look back or consider remarrying him, but he was happy enough to spend the rest of his life peacefully like this.

Ryan was presently sitting on the chair by Maverick's bed. He had propped his chin up with one hand while his elbow rested on his knee, completely captivated by Gwendolyn's stunning beauty.

"Ms. Shalders looks so attractive when she's serious!" he remarked.

However, when he thought about being suspended, his face fell. "But she can be really scary when she's mad, too. If only she could be gentle like this all the time."

Maverick had been admiring Gwendolyn's beauty in silence until Ryan started rambling on next to him. Eventually, he got quite annoyed and proceeded to grab the remote control from the bedside table, then decisively turned off the television.

Ryan had been daydreaming moments ago, but before he knew it, he was staring at a pitch-black screen instead of Gwendolyn's pretty face.

"Mr. Wright, what gives?" he asked disgruntledly.

Maverick didn't speak or pay any attention to him. His expression was somewhat cold, and due to being sick and having been injected with the special drug previously, his skin had taken on an unhealthy pallor. This only accentuated his intimidating presence.

Ryan looked at the somber man. Could it be that he's... He decided to ask outright, "Mr. Wright, you're not jealous because I praised Ms. Shalders, are you?"

"I only turned it off because I got bored watching it," Maverick lied impassively.

Ryan knew the man was lying, so he pointed out kindly, "Honestly, Mr. Wright, there's no chance for you and Ms. Shalders to be together again, especially since you've divorced her and now work as her housekeeper. Don't go getting your hopes up."

Maverick's face instantly darkened.

Unfazed and oblivious, Ryan continued, "Moreover, Ms. Shalders and Mr. Ferguson have had feelings for each other since they were young. They are both very compatible in terms of personality, family background, age, and appearance. So, why don't you just see through this one-year agreement without kicking up a fuss and then go back to being good old Mr. Wright?"

"Sherman Ferguson," Maverick bit out the name through gritted teeth.

He would be completely fine with Gwendolyn dating Sherman if that man were trustworthy. However, Maverick had met Sherman twice, and while the meetings had ended up in an argument between the two, he could tell from their conversations that Sherman was quite promiscuous.

Not to mention, he was compassionate, too.

Knowing how Gwendolyn made a habit out of returning a favor tenfold, she might end up getting hurt by Sherman, whether he did so intentionally or not.

There was no way Maverick could entrust Gwendolyn to a man like that!

“Mr. Wright?” Ryan probed when he noticed Maverick was spacing out.

Maverick immediately threw off the blanket and made to get out of bed. He even pulled out the IV drip needle without hesitation.

“Where are you going?” Ryan panicked and stood up.

Maverick put on his shoes, and without so much as a backward glance, he walked out of the door as he said coldly, “To get discharged.”

“Huh? You’ve only been here for a few days! The doctor will have to do another check-up on you and issue discharge paperwork before you can leave!” Ryan cried out after Maverick.

He hurriedly chased after Maverick, only to see the latter suddenly stop at the door of the hospital room.

When Ryan drew closer, Maverick held out his hand and said, “Give me your phone.”

The talent show this time was a huge success, largely due to Gwendolyn’s stunning revelation. As a result, Angle’s stock market soared, and the show received rave reviews.

That evening, Gwendolyn was discussing resource issues with Jennifer backstage when her phone suddenly rang.

She glanced down and saw that it was Ryan.

What mischief is Maverick up to now?

Her previously elated mood instantly turned sour.

She picked up the call calmly, but before she could say anything, a deep voice came down the other line.

“Gwendolyn, it’s me.”

Although Gwendolyn found it strange that Maverick was calling her, she didn’t bother to press him further and merely asked, “What’s wrong?”

“I’ve been discharged from the hospital. To celebrate the success of your first show, I’ll prepare a feast for us to enjoy together when you return. How does that sound?”

He spoke cautiously, the end of his sentence tinged with the fear of rejection, but there was anticipation in his undertone, too.

Gwendolyn sensed this and fell silent for a beat or two.

In the few minutes where she did not say anything, he waited anxiously, his heart racing. Nonetheless, he kept quiet and gave her time and space to consider his suggestion.

“I can’t make it tonight. I have a celebration party planned. Let’s talk about it another day,” she finally said.

She was just about to put down her phone when Maverick interjected anxiously, “Wait, don’t hang up! Are you... going to eat with Joaquin, Treyton, and the others?”

She did not bother lying. “Yes.”

“Well, then...” Maverick hesitated for a moment, “Will Sherman be there, too?”

“Yes,” she answered curtly.

It was just one word delivered with cold indifference, but it was enough to stoke the flames of Maverick's jealousy into a raging fire.

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He bit down on his pale lower lip and said in an appeasing, coquettish manner, "Can't you take a rain check? I know my cooking was bad before, but I promise I'll do better. Why don't you come back to Bay Villa tonight?"

Gwendolyn could not stand it when he used that tone on her. "No, there's no room for negotiation."

Maverick's jaw hardened. "If you don't come back, I'll hold a press conference tomorrow and tell the whole nation that I belong to you!"

She nearly laughed.

I've never seen a self-destructing idiot before.

Despite her amusement, she told him tersely, "You're just my housekeeper."

"Yeah, a housekeeper who belongs to you! Don't you dare claim otherwise!" he argued.

"Maverick!" She was furious now, and the ferocity of her voice made Jennifer jump.

It was only after he heard how angry Gwendolyn was that Maverick gave in. "I'm sorry. I just wanted you to come back to Bay Villa for a meal. You might not think I'm worthy enough to eat with you, but I wouldn't mind standing and watching you eat..."

Gwendolyn pressed her palm against her forehead. What the heck is wrong with him these days? It's like his shamelessness knows no bounds!

She didn't feel like arguing with him any further, so she casually agreed, "I'll go back to Bay Villa, but not until the celebration party is over. It might be quite late by the time I get back."

"Don't worry. I can wait, no matter how long it takes for you to get home," he said cheerily.

Although he couldn't stop her from attending the celebration party, at least Sherman would not be the only one there. He found comfort in the thought that Sherman would not be able to take any liberties with Gwendolyn.

After hanging up the phone, Maverick excitedly went to handle the discharge procedures.

Since Ryan had previously agreed to take care of Maverick until he recovered, there was no reason for him to follow Maverick back to Bay Villa following the latter's discharge from the hospital. As such, he called William and Quinton to pick Maverick up, then went home to serve his suspension.

Upon returning to Bay Villa, Maverick made a beeline for the kitchen and began to read up on recipes. Someone had been hired to stock up the refrigerator with fresh ingredients every day, so he could experiment with any dish he liked as long as the recipe did not call for anything too complicated.

It took him nearly three hours to prepare a table full of delicious dishes. He tasted each dish beforehand to ensure the flavors were well-balanced and perfect for Gwendolyn's palate.

Not knowing exactly when Gwendolyn would return, he covered each dish with a plate to prevent them from getting cold.

When he was done, he sat on the couch and waited patiently for Gwendolyn to come home.

Two hours had passed, and the food was getting cold. Seeing this, Maverick took the food back to the kitchen to reheat it. Once he was done, he covered it and continued to wait.

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That happened several times.

When he looked up at the clock again, he realized it was already four in the morning.

It's already so late, and she's not back yet. How long does a celebration party take to finish?

Maverick sat on the couch, and suddenly, out of nowhere, the scene of Gwendolyn's dinner party appeared before his eyes. Everyone was cheering and urging Gwendolyn and Sherman to drink from the same cup.

He sprang to his feet in an instant.

No way! Absolutely not!

He turned his head and headed for the door, but before he could even reach the garden, he was stopped by William and Quinton.

"Mr. Wright, it's quite late, and it's not safe to go out at this hour."

"I'm going to find Gwendolyn."

William and Quinton remained motionless. "Ms. Shalders will be back once she's done with her business. Besides, she has Elven protecting her, so please just wait patiently."

Maverick frowned. His expression was cold.

If Elven were there that night, maybe it would be easier to talk. However, William and Quinton had always disliked him, and they would not even bother to speak any more than necessary with him.

Having no other choice, Maverick had to go back and continue waiting.

The time spent waiting often felt the longest and most unbearable.

During this time, he thought about many things.

He vaguely recalled that during the past three years, Gwendolyn had called him numerous times, hoping he would come home for dinner. Sometimes he would respond with a few perfunctory words, while other times, he could not be bothered to talk to her and would hang up the phone directly, not returning home for two or three days in a row.

So this is what it feels like to endure a sleepless night of waiting...

He lifted his head, gazing at the clock hanging on the wall across the room. His eyes followed the minute hand as it moved, and before he knew it, he had fallen asleep on the couch.

After an unknown amount of time had passed, he was awakened by the sound of a door opening.

Sure enough, it was Gwendolyn who came in. His face lit up with delight as he stood up to greet her, "You're back! The food has gone cold, so I'll go warm it up right now."

Gwendolyn declined emotionlessly. "No need. I've already had breakfast."

"Breakfast?"

Maverick glanced at the clock on the wall, only to see it was already seven o'clock in the morning.

He could not believe that she did not come back at all last night while he sat on the couch waiting for her the entire night.

Maverick felt quite puzzled. "Why didn't you come back last night? Did you get drunk? Where did you sleep? Were you with Sherman the whole night? He didn't try anything with you, did he?"

Gwendolyn was speechless.

What does Sherman have anything to do with this? And with so many questions, which one should I answer first?

As she changed into her slippers, she said, "Jennifer got drunk last night, so I took her back to her place. Since she was dizzy and vomiting all night, I stayed and took care of her."

Maverick stood there, completely stunned.

Jennifer? The trainee who just made her debut? D*mn it, will I have to be on guard not only against men but women too?

Gwendolyn rubbed her sore and swollen shoulders, preparing to go upstairs.

Maverick grabbed her wrist. "Gwendolyn, I spent nearly three hours preparing that table of dishes last night. I'm sincere. Do you want to—"

He did not even get to finish his sentence when it was interrupted by Gwendolyn's cold gaze.

"So what? I've already eaten. If you haven't had breakfast, go ahead and eat that."

His heart suddenly ached, as if this sentence weighed heavily on his chest, making it difficult to breathe. He was stunned for a long time, unable to utter a single word.

Seeing that he had nothing else to say, Gwendolyn forcibly broke free from his grip and went back upstairs to her room.

Maverick watched her walk away. Then, he turned his head to look at the meal he had carefully prepared last night that was neatly arranged on the table and remained untouched.

The presentation of the dishes was still exquisite, but the food had gone completely cold, just like his heart.

Suddenly, a feeling of indescribable emptiness and guilt welled up in him.

Gwendolyn went upstairs to change her clothes, and as soon as she walked to the stairway, she saw him standing there, looking utterly disheartened and lost.

She coughed gently, bringing Maverick's thoughts back to the present. "Hurry up and finish your meal, then change into clean clothes and come with me on an errand."

"Where are we going?"

Gwendolyn's lips curved into a sly smile. "The Wright mansion."

A loud bang rang out in the air.

The residents of the Wright Mansion were still asleep when they were suddenly awakened by the loud noise.

Dexter hurriedly led his wife, Cecelia Xander, downstairs to have a look.

His daughter, Carol Wright, was terrified as well. As she ran downstairs, she asked, "Mom, Dad! Is that an earthquake? Is that an earthquake?"

The three of them looked baffled. It was not until they reached the first floor that they discovered a large crowd gathered in the living room.

Gwendolyn was sitting on the main seat of the couch, having tea as though she were the mistress of the house.

Four well-trained, tall, and handsome bodyguards stood behind her couch, while Maverick stood at the side.

They all had serious expressions and an intimidating presence, as if they were there to collect a debt.

Dexter and his family looked at each other, all with bewildered expressions on their faces.

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As they approached, Gwendolyn was the first to laugh and say, "It seems that your family hasn't been doing too well lately, Mr. Wright. You've even let go of your housekeepers. The Wright mansion is huge, yet there's not even one person to pour me tea, so I had to trouble my bodyguard to do it."

Dexter knew she was deliberately belittling him, but he could not find a way to refute her.

The Wright family relied on the monthly dividends from Wright Construction Group to make a living. However, after what Samantha and Frida did to the company, it was uncertain how long it would take for Wright Construction Group to regain its former glory and provide substantial dividends for the family.

Hence, during this period, they had been living quite frugally.

Dexter's face darkened, and his tone was unpleasant as he said, "Are you always this rude when entering someone's home? Don't you know how to knock? What was that loud noise just now? What did you do?"

“Oh dear! My door! What a disaster! You’ve gone too far!”

His wife, Cecelia, quickly reacted and hurriedly went out to check. Upon noting the state of the door, she felt her heart aching.

Gwendolyn tilted her head and gave a wry smile, expressing her helplessness. “Your door is old and has been neglected for a long time. When my bodyguard William knocked on it, he only used a tiny bit of force, and it just broke on its own. What can I do, right? I’m just helping Mr. Wright clean up some trash.”

Dexter was so frustrated that he felt like he was going to have a heart attack.

How could knocking on such a thick steel door with your hand possibly break the whole thing down? It’s obvious that it was kicked open!

However, after watching the talent show with Carol last night, he now knew that this woman was not only the boss behind Angle but also the current CEO and largest shareholder of Wright Construction Group. It was clear that both Treyton and Joaquin were powerful figures supporting her from behind the scenes.

He had absolutely no chance of winning if he went head-to-head with her.

Therefore, he shifted his focus toward Maverick.

With a worried expression, he said, “Maverick, look at her! Even though she’s your ex-wife, she used to listen to you the most. Are you just going to let her bully us now?”

The sentence “she used to listen to you the most” sent a shiver down Maverick’s spine.

It turned out that everyone knew she used to love him deeply, but he was the only one unaware of that, and he even ignored all her efforts and sacrifices.

He suppressed the emotions welling up in his heart. Staring at Dexter with cold eyes, he spoke in a frosty tone.

“Uncle Dexter, you secretly gave my mom some bad advice and handed her two packets of shady stuff, which almost led to a disaster. How do you explain this?”

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What? Did they guess it? Or did Frida betray me?

Dexter stumbled back in shock.

After calming down, he grinned, revealing eight teeth, and played dumb. “Maverick, what do you mean by that? I don’t understand.”

Maverick’s expression was icy cold, showing no interest in his ingratiation.

Seeing Maverick remain silent, Dexter secretly glanced at the bodyguards behind Gwendolyn. Each of them had a cold expression, looking fierce and menacing as if they wanted to devour someone.

Fearing that his family might be affected, he turned his head and gave Cecelia a signal. “Carol hasn’t freshened up yet, right? You should quickly take her upstairs to wash up. We have to show a good image in front of distinguished guests.”

“Okay.” Cecelia understood and turned to grab her beloved daughter. “Carol, let’s go.”

Before they could even approach the stairs, Gwendolyn’s four bodyguards swiftly stepped forward to block their way.

Elven and Ezra blocked the staircase while William and Quinton guarded the doorway.

“W-What are you doing? This is ridiculous! I’m in my own house!”

Dexter's face turned red with anger.

Carol felt a little scared, so she shrank back into Cecelia's embrace.

"No one can leave today before everything is explained clearly."

Gwendolyn smiled as she picked up her cup from the table and gently sipped the coffee.

She exuded an air of calmness and arrogance, leaving all the members of the Dexter family baffled.

Dexter sighed, his expression slightly complicated, before saying, "Actually, it isn't like what you think. When I found out Frida was the housekeeper at the Wright residence, I went to visit her. I don't know where she got those two packets of drugs from. She told me about her plan and asked for my help, but I didn't agree and even tried to persuade her otherwise..."

He paused as if coming to a sudden realization. "It seems that she has succeeded? Did anything happen to you, my ex-niece-in-law? I heard that the drug is quite strong. It's all my fault! I should have persuaded her more."

As he spoke, he sighed and expressed his "regret."

What he had said not only drew a clear line between himself and the matter but also reminded Gwendolyn that they were once relatives.

Gwendolyn frowned slightly. "In the future, please address me as Ms. Shalders. The words 'ex-niece-in-law' make me feel quite uncomfortable."

After she finished speaking, she glanced at Maverick standing next to her with an amused look in her eyes. "He said Frida asked him for it, while Frida claimed he encouraged her. Who do you think I should believe?"

Maverick stared sternly at Dexter and sneered, "Uncle Dexter, a man shouldn't blame a woman for everything that goes wrong."

This sentence was an affirmative statement.

Dexter's face flushed with anger as he pointed at the man and scolded, "You're just Ms. Shalders' housekeeper now. What right do you have to interrupt our conversation? Stand aside!"

His change in attitude was sudden and rapid.

Gwendolyn most detested those cunning old foxes who spoke differently in different situations and to different people.

She waved her hand, not wanting to listen to his nonsense any longer. In response, Elven placed an exquisite black-and-gold box on the coffee table.

"What is that?" Dexter asked in perplexity.

Gwendolyn smiled slightly. "This is the modest gift I brought to the Wright Mansion today. Mr. Wright, would you like to open it and take a look?"

Dexter didn't respond. Although he had no idea what she was trying to do, he felt that there was a hint of ill intent in her smile.

Upon hearing that there was a gift, Cecelia smiled politely and said, "Ms. Shalders, it's already so nice of you to come, and you even brought a gift. That's too kind of you."

She walked forward to take a closer look. Upon seeing the exquisitely crafted black-and-gold box on the coffee table, she thought that the contents inside must be equally impressive.

Out of curiosity, she opened the box. Yet, she was completely baffled by its contents.

There were thirty small bottles, each only half the size of a fist, neatly arranged in rows.

She casually picked one and opened it. In the small bottle was transparent liquid with a strange smell.

“W-What is this?”

Elven replied, “These were specifically prepared by Ms. Shalders for you and your family, Mr. Wright. Each of you will have to choose one bottle to drink every day.”

Dexter couldn’t figure out what trick Gwendolyn was playing. As he stepped forward and took a sniff, his face changed drastically. He quickly grabbed the bottle in Cecelia’s hand and put it back.

“Are these all the sleeping drug?”

Gwendolyn rested her chin on her hand, smiling radiantly.

“Well, not all of them are. Nothing here can poison you to death, but there are laxatives, itch drugs, and others. Out of the thirty bottles, five are syrup. The odds of getting syrup are much higher than winning the lottery, right?”

“Y-You...”

Dexter and his wife were left speechless by her words, and they were unable to utter a single sentence for a while.

Carol finally understood what was going on and was terrified. “Dad, I don’t want to drink them! I don’t want to drink that kind of stuff...”

The family of three huddled together, shivering in fear.

“You’re really ruthless! Even if you don’t care that we used to be relatives, this has nothing to do with me. I—”

Gwendolyn raised her hand to cut off Dexter’s attempt to defend himself. “You and I both know the truth of this matter. Besides, it’s not just because of this matter.”

Dexter asked in puzzlement, “What else have I done to you?”

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"You helped Frida harm me in front of Old Mr. Wright before, and I haven't forgotten that. You shouldn't have forgotten either, right? Besides, you slapped Maverick. And now, this sleeping drug incident."

That's three strikes against you. You deserve this."

Maverick, who was standing aside, keenly heard the second crime Dexter committed, and his heart suddenly filled with warmth.

She still remembers Uncle Dexter hitting me and wants to help me get revenge. I wonder if she still has feelings for me deep down.

Dexter also noticed she had mentioned Maverick. "Maverick is a member of the Wright family. As an elder, what's wrong with me giving him a slap? You're going too far by including this!"

Gwendolyn responded, "He's my housekeeper, so only my people can teach him a lesson. The Wright family can't do that."

She said "only my people," not "only me," which means Treyton can do anything to me, too.

Maverick wasn't so happy after hearing that.

Dexter was speechless.

He would rather be outright killed than drink a bottle of drugs every day like participating in a lottery.

“Anyway, you can give up on that idea. I won’t admit to a single word you said, and I definitely won’t drink those bottles!”

Gwendolyn couldn’t help but laugh.

“I’m not here to negotiate with you today.” As soon as she finished speaking, she glanced at Elven.

Elven quickly placed a stack of photocopies in front of the three people. “Take a good look. Here we have Mrs. Wright’s confession, the evidence of you hiring someone to buy the sleeping drugs from the

black market, and a timeline of the entire incident. Do you want to take this to the police and face a conviction, or do you want to accept Ms. Shalders’ gift?”

The expressions of the three people changed dramatically.

Dexter was shocked and was unable to utter a word. He couldn’t believe that in such a short time, this woman had already done a thorough investigation and found out so much information.

After all, he did pay the black-market hush money.

Cecelia said, “Oh, Hubby. You can’t go to jail! You’re the backbone of our family. If something happens to you, what will Carol and I do?”

Carol also said, “Mom is right. Dad, you can’t go to jail! If you have a criminal record, how can I hold my head up in front of my high-society friends? And no wealthy man would want to marry me. I won’t be able to get married, Dad!”

Dexter was caught between a rock and a hard place. His eyes turned red as he looked at his wife and daughter. “But making you two drink that torturous stuff every day breaks my heart too!”

Cecelia and Carol exchanged glances. "Why should we drink? You are the one who did wrong. Can't you just choose three bottles at once?"

Dexter was dumbfounded.

Chapter 134

"You..."

Did they just sell me out?

Dexter was quite frustrated.

However, this matter indeed had nothing to do with Cecelia and Carol, so he could understand their refusal to take the drugs with him.

Regardless, if he had to choose three bottles a day, what if he had bad luck and all three turned out to be the sleeping drugs? Would he survive that?

In case he ended up choosing both the sleeping drug and the laxative, wouldn't he be tormented to death from both ends?

No way! I have to drag someone down with me, even if I die!

He clenched his teeth in anger, glaring at Maverick. "You little brat! You're helping an outsider set up your own uncle! Have you forgotten that your mother is involved in this too? If I'm found guilty, she should be punished as well! If I'm going to be tormented by all this, she shouldn't be faring any better!"

Maverick's expression remained indifferent. "She made a mistake, so of course she should be punished. I won't show favoritism. Besides, I've already taken the punishment Gwendolyn gave to her on her behalf."

That drug had almost sent him to hell.

He would never forget the heart-wrenching pain in his lifetime.

In other words, he was expressing how he would uphold justice even at the expense of his own family, and he had even been punished on behalf of his mother. That way, Dexter had nothing else he could say.

Dexter was unwilling to accept the situation, but when he looked at the four bodyguards Gwendolyn had brought with her, he realized that none of them would be easy to deal with. Even if he counted heads, his side was still outnumbered.

Since there was no other way, Dexter said with a sigh, “My ex-niece-in-law—Wait, no. Ms. Shalders, could you please give me a discount? Please take into account my old age. I can’t withstand this kind of torment.”

Gwendolyn smiled joyfully. “Mr. Wright, since you’ve asked for it, of course, it’s possible.”

Before Dexter could even feel happy, he heard her continue, “But you’ll have to exchange it for the Wright Construction Group shares you hold. One percent of Wright Construction Group shares can save you from two bottles.”

In other words, he wouldn’t need to drink a single bottle if he gave up all his shares.

Cecelia and Carol both thought this was a good idea.

“Hubby, now that the stock market for Wright Construction Group has plummeted and the shares are hardly worth anything, why not use them to waive off the drugs? That way, you don’t have to suffer.”

“That’s a woman’s perspective!” Dexter rejected her idea right away.

It was obvious that Gwendolyn had come today with her sights set on his shares!

That was the source of income for his entire family, and it was also the last thing Declan had left for him. There was no way he could easily hand it over to an outsider.

“Have you decided yet?” Gwendolyn asked, pursing her lips.

“Absolutely not! There’s no way I’m giving up any shares, not in this lifetime or the next!”

He glanced at the opened black-and-gold box on the table, took a deep breath, and bravely chose three bottles. Opening them, he swallowed their contents without even paying attention to the taste. After finishing, he immediately squatted on the ground, retching.

Cecelia and Carol hurried over to hold him. His face paled from the fright as he exclaimed, “Quick! Go call a doctor! Otherwise, it’ll be too late when the drugs start to take effect!”

Seeing that he still acted so cowardly despite his old age, the bodyguards burst into uproarious laughter.

Previously, when it was Maverick’s turn, he drank it without even blinking an eye despite being aware that it was a sleeping drug.

Both of them had the last name Wright, but there was a significant difference when it came to their pride.

Gwendolyn said, “From now on, William and Quinton will watch you drink three bottles every day. Only when you finish them all will it count.”

After she finished speaking, she left the Wright mansion without looking back.

Maverick immediately followed her.

After dealing with Dexter, it was almost time to go to work.

This time, Gwendolyn didn't plan on letting Maverick go straight home. Instead, she took him along with her to visit the construction site of Wright Construction Group.

In the car, Gwendolyn explained, "Wright Construction Group faced some issues at the Balmoral Grand construction site. Due to Frida's poor management and Samantha cutting corners, the building collapsed. It even affected the newly built structure next to it. Samantha has been delaying the payment, causing the construction team to become disheartened, which led to them causing problems for the company. If you were in this situation, what would you do?"

After giving it some thought, Maverick succinctly said, "Compensate and appease the workers."

Gwendolyn had thought he would come up with some awe-inspiring solution, but now it seemed that she had overestimated him.

"It's pointless. Yulia tried that from the very beginning, but the workers have lost trust in the company and aren't putting in their best efforts anymore. However, if we replace all the workers, I'm afraid it will dishearten the entire staff of the Balmoral Grand project."

Soon, the car arrived at the Balmoral Grand construction site.

Maverick looked up at the buildings outside the window and made eye contact with Gwendolyn. His expression was sincere when he stated, "If you're willing to trust me once, you can leave the entire project to me. I can handle it."

Gwendolyn pondered for a moment but didn't agree.

Just then, Joanne called again. There was an issue at Angle's place that required her attention.

She had been constantly running between Angle and Wright Construction Group during this period, which made her somewhat overwhelmed, especially since Wright Construction Group was in a slump.

It would take quite some time to return the company to its former glory and to get back the eight-point-eight billion from Samantha, along with the interest.

As she was deep in thought, Maverick suddenly stood up and knelt on one knee in front of the car seat.

His dark eyes were intently gazing at her.

Cecelio and Corol hurried over to hold him. His face paled from the fright as he exclaimed, "Quick! Go call a doctor! Otherwise, it'll be too late when the drugs start to take effect!"

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This time, Gwendolyn didn't plan on letting Maverick go straight home. Instead, she took him along with her to visit the construction site of Wright Construction Group.

In the car, Gwendolyn explained, "Wright Construction Group faced some issues at the Bolmorol Grand construction site. Due to Frida's poor management and Somontho cutting corners, the building collapsed. It even affected the newly built structure next to it. Somontho has been delaying the

payment, causing the construction team to become disheartened, which led to them causing problems for the company. If you were in this situation, what would you do?"

After giving it some thought, Moverick succinctly said, "Compensate and appease the workers."

Gwendolyn had thought he would come up with some awe-inspiring solution, but now it seemed that she had overestimated him.

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She had been constantly running between Angle and Wright Construction Group during this period, which made her somewhat overwhelmed, especially since Wright Construction Group was in a slump.

It would take quite some time to return the company to its former glory and to get back the eight-point-eight billion from Somontho, along with the interest.

As she was deep in thought, Moverick suddenly stood up and knelt on one knee in front of the car seat.

His dark eyes were intently gazing at her.

“Gwendolyn, please believe me. Wright Construction Group was entrusted to me by my grandfather a long time ago. It is the foundation of the entire Wright family. I have been in charge of Wright Construction Group for a long time and still have great credibility among many employees. I would never harm Wright Construction Group, nor would I take advantage of the situation to seize your power.”

Gwendolyn lifted his chin with her slender fingertips and said with a cold tone, “Considering what you’ve done recently, why should I believe you?”

Maverick was at a loss for words for a moment.

Previously, in order to test her identity, he had hurt her. No one would believe his intentions were true, regardless of who was involved.

“I admit that when I first agreed to sign the agreement, I did want to test you. But as I spent time with you, I realized that I truly like you, and I’ve only ever liked you! So, I genuinely want to be by your side, Gwendolyn. I...”

Gwendolyn placed her index finger on her red lips, making a silencing gesture, not wanting to hear him continue with such cheesy words.

Maverick sensibly kept quiet.

Gwendolyn asked, “If you were to handle the Balmoral Grand project, what would you need from me?”

“Delegate authority.”

As soon as these two words were spoken, Gwendolyn laughed. “You said you had no ulterior motives, but Maverick, you are good at acting. It would be a waste if you don’t sign with Angle to become an artist.”

She cast him a cold glance and opened the door, ready to get out of the car.

Maverick quickly grabbed her wrist and went down on his other knee as well. With his back straight, he clarified, "I want power, not to take back Wright Construction Group, but to make those people believe in me. If you're worried, you can have William and Quinton keep an eye on me. I won't do anything sneaky."

There was an unprecedented sincerity in his dark eyes and even a hint of vulnerability that was not easy to detect.

Gwendolyn glanced at her phone, and Joanne was still continuously sending her messages.

She hesitated slightly. "Okay. I'll trust you once. You'll have to deal with the entire Balmoral Grand project, from pacifying the team to construction and completing the basic structure. I'll give you one month. If you can't finish it or dare to play any tricks, then..."

Maverick nodded. "If I can't complete it, you can have my life."

Is this a matter of life and death?

"You're the one who said that. But there's one more thing. You can't let your work interfere with the housekeeping at the villa. Before I return home every day, the villa must be spotless, and dinner should be piping hot. Can you manage that?"

There were only twenty-four hours in a day, and after accounting for eating and sleeping, he was essentially left with just half the time.

In the limited time available, it was challenging for him to accomplish tasks on both sides simultaneously.

However, Maverick did not hesitate. His dark eyes were fixed on her as he smiled dotingly. "Okay. A real man won't say no!"

Gwendolyn frowned slightly, sensing a hint of flirtation in those words.

She snorted coldly and retorted with a hint of sarcasm, "I don't remember if you were any good before, but now, I guess you're just..."

Maverick's face turned pale instantly as he understood her meaning. Due to the injection of the special drug, his physical strength was no longer what it used to be.

But as a man, how could he possibly admit defeat in that aspect?

Without hesitation, he responded, "Why don't we try it now? See if I'm still as good?"

"Are you out of your mind!"

Gwendolyn was furious and glared at Maverick. She viciously pinched his left cheek with her hand and twisted it hard.

"Ouch, that hurts..."

Maverick's face scrunched up in pain, but he didn't dare to dodge. All he could do was whine and cry out in pain.

Only then did Gwendolyn let go angrily.

A large red mark appeared on the left side of his face. Though it hurt so much that he was almost in tears, he didn't dare to rub it in front of Gwendolyn and could only flash her an aggrieved expression.

Even though she knew he was putting on an act for her, she felt much better when she saw his sad face, and her anger subsided.

"Get out and start your first day. I'm going back to Angle."

“All right.”

Maverick first brushed off the thin layer of dust on his knee and pant leg, then sat back in the car seat. After adjusting his collar slightly, he put on a cool expression as he opened the car door and stepped out of the vehicle.

Gwendolyn watched as the man effortlessly switched between expressions. Such a waste he didn't go on to become an actor!

She then called to arrange for William and Ryan, who were in a car behind hers, to follow Maverick while she went straight to Angle.

Time seemed to fly by when one was working diligently.

It was almost the end of the work day, and Gwendolyn was getting ready to call Yulia to ask about the situation with the Balmoral Grand project.

Before she could dial the number, she received an incoming call from Yulia.

The woman sounded very excited as she told Gwendolyn, “Boss, I don't know what Mr. Wright did, the situation at Balmoral Grand has already returned to normal, and it's only his first day! The atmosphere among the construction team is also very harmonious. It's truly amazing!”

Gwendolyn frowned slightly upon hearing that. “You've only known him for a day, and you're already calling him Mr. Wright?”

“Huh? No, no, no! I will always be loyal to you, Boss! My heart belongs to you, whether in life or death.”

Gwendolyn rubbed her forehead and said, “Enough. I don't need a beautiful ghost hovering around me in the afterlife.”

A chuckle escaped Yulia's mouth at that.

Gwendolyn quickly regained her composure and instructed, "Continue working with him and review all his decisions personally. Let him be in charge in public, but you call the shots behind the scenes. Also, learn from the way he handles problematic projects."

"Yes, Boss."

After she hung up the phone, Gwendolyn continued to arrange Jennifer's schedule.

With Jennifer's rising popularity, apart from the group's performance schedule, Gwendolyn also helped her secure some brand endorsements.

As this was Jennifer's first endorsement photoshoot, Gwendolyn was worried the former might get stage fright, so she planned to keep an eye on Jennifer that night.

However, at the same time, Gwendolyn was also planning to leave work half an hour early to go home and check on Maverick's progress with the household chores.

She had arranged for Joanne to be in charge of the other artists. So, after much thought, Gwendolyn felt it wouldn't be a bad idea to have Treyton personally keep an eye on things.

Treyton was quite surprised when he received her call. "Kiddo, you want me to look after a new artist during their endorsement photoshoot? Am I really that insignificant to you?"

"I think you've got it wrong, Treyton. Jennifer is the artist I'm currently focusing on. Only with your presence will we be able to demonstrate the company's commitment to her. In a way, this also shows how much we value you."

Treyton knew she was merely coaxing him, but when he heard his beloved little sister say she valued him the most, his heart felt warm and fuzzy.

“Such a smooth talker. I’ll help you out this time.”

“Thank you, Treyton.”

After she finished arranging everything at hand, Gwendolyn drove back to Bay Villa.

As soon as she entered the garden, she asked Quinton and Ryan, “When did Maverick return?”

“Mr. Wright arrived home an hour ago, and he hasn’t stopped working since.”

Gwendolyn thought for a moment before asking, “What about during the day?”

“Everything was normal during the day, and we were always by his side.”

Will he really behave himself and not cause any trouble?

Gwendolyn was doubtful about it.

However, it was only the first day. If he wanted to gain her trust, he would have to restrain himself for a few days at least.

She pushed the door open while deep in thought.

Maverick came out of the kitchen upon hearing some movement. When he saw it was Gwendolyn, his eyes widened in surprise. “You’re early today.”

Gwendolyn raised her eyebrows. “Is there a problem?”

“Of course not.”

Maverick stepped forward, took a pair of slippers from the shoe cabinet, and placed them next to her feet. "You've worked hard today."

Gwendolyn could hear the slight panting in Maverick's voice, and his white shirt collar was soaked with sweat. Clearly, in the hour before she arrived home, he had been on his feet, completely swamped with work.

"Is dinner ready?"

"Almost. Can you give me another twenty minutes?"

"Yes, Boss."

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"Is dinner ready?"

"Almost. Can you give me another twenty minutes?"

When she saw that he hadn't been idle, Gwendolyn decided not to give him a hard time. She gently hummed in acknowledgment and then went upstairs.

In the evening at Fairlake Male Prison, the inmates were granted half an hour of free time after they had their meal.

The most respected person in prison had a visitation that night, so Noah planned to take advantage of his absence to sneak off to the bathroom for a shower.

There weren't many people taking showers during that time. Just as he finished taking off his shirt, someone covered his mouth with a white cloth from behind and forcefully dragged him to the corner.

Although his martial arts skills weren't bad, Noah couldn't withstand the surprise attack from eight strong men who were pinning him down from behind.

He tried to make a sound, but it was all muffled up. By the time he realized there was a sedative on the white cloth, it was already too late, and he completely lost consciousness.

When Noah woke up again, he noticed that his surroundings had changed entirely.

He was in a dilapidated and dimly-lit house.

Evidently, he had been transported out of the prison.

Noah struggled with his wrists, only to find that both of his hands were tightly bound with ropes. He was hanging upside down from the beam of the dilapidated house, with his toes barely able to touch a surface and maintain balance.

The position was quite tiring. As both of his hands were suspended, it would cause his entire whole body to tire quickly.

Creak.

The door of the house swung open. Noah's gaze flickered upon seeing who had entered.

"Nico, Neville, you guys..."

Nico ignored him, but Neville walked up and punched him. "Traitor! Why do you care so much about Natasha? How dare you help her frame Boss in front of Ms. Shalders. Are you stupid, Noah?"

At the mention of Natasha was mentioned, Noah became agitated. "Don't you dare talk about her like that! What has she done wrong? It's all Gwendolyn's fault! You and Boss have been deceived by that despicable woman!"

Neville was so enraged that he felt like he was about to have a stroke.

I thought only girls become foolish when they are in love. How come his intelligence went straight to negative?

“You’re unbelievable! How can you still be so dim after many years of being at Boss’ side? Your stupidity can’t even be described by mere words!”

Neville was stomping his feet in anger, but Noah remained stubborn. He would not allow them to say anything bad about Natasha.

At that point, Nico let out a sigh in exasperation. “He’s not listening at all. Anything you say will simply go to waste. Since he thinks Natasha is that great, let’s just show him the evidence!”

Stubbornness was written all over Noah’s face until Neville presented the evidence against Natasha...

Chapter 136

“H-How is this possible...”

Before Noah could finish speaking, his gaze fell on the evidence that Neville had placed in front of him. The evidence showed the incident at the Mossey residence, where Noah had encountered a killer disguised as a doctor.

Natasha was the one behind it? So she pretended to take me in but was secretly planning to kill me?

As realization dawned upon him, he couldn’t help but shed tears. The evidence that Nico and Neville had gathered was undoubtedly genuine, and Noah was well aware of that.

For that reason, he was extremely heartbroken. His heart was in so much pain that he felt like he was suffocating.

Natasha had been deceiving me for so long... How could she do this to me...

"I'm sorry. I've let Boss down and betrayed his trust. For that, I'll accept whatever punishment that awaits me."

Hearing Noah's miserable wails, Nico sighed. "Tell me everything you've done for Natasha previously, and don't get a single detail wrong."

"Okay..."

Nico listened as Noah recounted everything. Meanwhile, Neville was at the side, recording Noah's every word with his laptop.

"That's all. Ever since the hijacking incident, I've been put in jail by Gwendolyn's subordinates."

Neville handed the laptop over to Nico, who gave the contents one thorough look-through before closing the device and casting a slightly complicated gaze at Noah.

Nico began, "As friends who once fought side by side, this is the last time we meet you. Is there anything you'd like to say?"

Noah closed his eyes, feeling utterly devastated.

"I have nothing to say. I blame it all on my stupidity. Go ahead and do it."

Hearing this, Nico instantly burst into laughter. "You thought Boss wanted to kill you? He'd much prefer you stay alive and repent."

He then glanced at the time before instructing Neville, "Get two people to whip him a hundred times but keep him barely alive to be sent back to the prison. Also, tell the leaders of the two prison factions that whoever dares to treat him well in the future will be going against Boss."

"Understood."

At that, Nico picked up the laptop and left the dilapidated house without looking back.

Before long, the sounds of a whip hitting one's skin could be heard echoing from the house, mixed with the agonizing wails of a man. The noise was both spine-chilling and tragic.

The next day, Gwendolyn headed straight to work after finishing her breakfast.

Maverick did the dishes, then left the house after her.

Although he was no longer in charge of Wright Construction Group, he had the prestige that he'd developed from his years of managing the group. Coupled with the fact that he still had forty percent of the company's shares in his hands, he remained a largely influential figure.

Besides, the only difference was that his office had been moved from the twenty-eighth floor to the twenty-third floor—a minor change in Maverick's books, as it was merely superficial. On the other hand, if it was something Gwendolyn wanted, he would go all out to help her.

That said, it didn't mean others shared the same sentiments as him.

During lunchtime, Andie and Branson knocked on the door to Maverick's office.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Wright." The two smiled flatteringly at him.

Maverick's gaze fell on them, though his tone remained icy-cold when he questioned, "What's the matter?"

Andie and Branson exchanged glances. "We came to discuss something with you, Mr. Wright."

"Talk to Ms. Shalders if it's a major issue and Ms. Sullivan if it's something minor." The man didn't even bother lifting his head as he spoke.

Both of their faces' stiffened as they exchanged yet another glance.

Then, Branson hurriedly explained, "Ever since the change in ownership at Wright Construction Group, Ms. Sullivan has been trying to suppress us senior employees who have been with you for years. Moreover, Ms. Shalders is like a ghost. We can't even look for her to raise our concerns. Now that you're back, haven't you thought about regaining control over the company?"

Maverick paused for a moment but did not say anything.

Nevertheless, Andie seized the opportunity to add fuel to the fire upon noticing the man's reaction. "The newly appointed Ms. Shalders seems to have no clue about the real estate industry, nor does Ms. Sullivan seem to have an opinion. The company can't keep going like this, can it?"

Maverick rested his hand on the table, drumming his fingers on the surface and seemingly lost in thought.

"Just get straight to the point and tell me what you're planning to do," he said.

"If you have any thoughts of reclaiming Wright Construction Group, we will give you our full support. No, not just us but many senior employees are willing to follow your lead. Ms. Shalders may have five percent more shares than you do, but you've been in charge of the company for a long time. The chances of you winning against her won't be low!"

After a moment of silence, Maverick finally responded, "Who are the people who are willing to lend me their support? Give me a name list."

Andie and Branson were pleasantly surprised. "So, does this mean you agree?"

Maverick pursed his lips, his expression indecipherable. He did not respond to them.

The two men were well aware of his quiet and indifferent temperament, so they took the silence as an agreement and obediently handed over a name list.

When Maverick regains control over Wright Construction Group, perhaps senior employees like us, who've defended the company tirelessly, might be awarded some of the company's shares.

At that thought, Andie and Branson were filled with delight. "We'll let you get back to your work, Mr. Wright. Please let us know if there's anything you need us to do, anything at all!"

Maverick merely hummed an acknowledgment.

At that, the two men tactfully closed the door and left.

While Maverick was looking at the name list, a graceful figure, clad in a pair of high heels, quietly opened the door.

He seemed to notice something out of the corner of his eyes and instinctively raised his head.

It was Gwendolyn, who was wearing a white figure-hugging dress. She leaned against the doorframe with her hands crossed in front of her chest, looking at him with a half-smile. However, the smile didn't quite reach her eyes, and her gaze was icy.

From Maverick's angle, he had a great view of the woman's exquisite figure.

"Why are you here?"

"I own this entire building now, so can't I come here? Or... did I come here at the wrong time and happened to hear something I shouldn't have?" was Gwendolyn's indifferent response.

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Andie and Bronson were pleasantly surprised. "So, does this mean you agree?"

Moverick pursed his lips, his expression indecipherable. He did not respond to them.

The two men were well aware of his quiet and indifferent temperament, so they took the silence as an agreement and obediently handed over a name list.

When Moverick regains control over Wright Construction Group, perhaps senior employees like us, who've defended the company tirelessly, might be awarded some of the company's shares.

At that thought, Andie and Bronson were filled with delight. "We'll let you get back to your work, Mr. Wright. Please let us know if there's anything you need us to do, anything at all!"

Moverick merely hummed in acknowledgment.

At that, the two men tactfully closed the door and left.

While Moverick was looking at the name list, a graceful figure, clad in a pair of high heels, quietly opened the door.

He seemed to notice something out of the corner of his eyes and instinctively raised his head.

It was Gwendolyn, who was wearing a white figure-hugging dress. She leaned against the doorframe with her hands crossed in front of her chest, looking at him with a half-smile. However, the smile didn't quite reach her eyes, and her gaze was icy.

From Moverick's angle, he had a great view of the woman's exquisite figure.

"Why are you here?"

"I own this entire building now, so can't I come here? Or... did I come here at the wrong time and happened to hear something I shouldn't have?" was Gwendolyn's indifferent response.

"I didn't mean that."

Maverick rose to his feet, led her to the couch, then poured her a cup of coffee.

After that, he handed over the name list he had gotten from Andie and Branson moments earlier. "Have a look at this."

Gwendolyn skimmed through the document and was slightly surprised.

"These are the people who are confidently supporting you in reclaiming Wright Construction Group, and you sold them out just like this?"

With his lips pursed, Maverick slowly knelt on one knee and lifted his gaze to look at her.

The woman was puzzled by his actions. "What are you doing?"

"From now on, I won't allow you to look up at me when we're conversing. I'm the one who should be looking up at you."

As he uttered those words, sincerity filled his dark, obsidian eyes. His striking features resembled a work of art.

Because he had received an injection of the special drug, his countenance was slightly pale. Nevertheless, there was an otherworldly beauty about him.

Gwendolyn was stunned for two seconds, unable to believe that such words could actually come out of Maverick's mouth.

"You're really going all out to gain my trust," she remarked.

"I know you don't believe me right now, but as time goes by, you'll understand I'm not lying to you."

A sneer escaped the woman's mouth as she viciously gripped his lower jaw. "Maverick, I hate being deceived the most. Back then, you had a sharp tongue and hated me to your bones, but at least you were honest. If I find out you're lying to me, it will not end well for you!"

Maverick was rendered speechless. But I was being truthful when I said all that!

After that, she loosened her grip around his jaw and shifted her gaze back onto the name list. "What do you think I should do with these employees who are utterly devoted to you?"

Maverick sighed. "They're all senior employees who have been working in Wright Construction Group for many years, and we can't just terminate them all. Besides, all humans are selfish. If you provide senior employees with excellent benefits, they'll support you just as much in the long run."

"So you want me to turn a blind eye to this and pretend I have no idea about this?"

"That's right. With the name list, you'll have a clearer idea of who to target and guard against. You can give them bonuses where deemed appropriate while having your guard up against any signs of disloyalty."

Gwendolyn pondered for a moment, somewhat skeptical of the man's words. "So you had Andie and Branson compile this name list with the intention of handing it over to me?"

"Yes. If you hadn't come today, I would've handed it to you when we were back at Bay Villa. Coincidentally, you came over and even almost misunderstood me..."

As Maverick reached the end of his speech, the corners of his lips curved downward ever so slightly, displaying a hint of grievance.

Gwendolyn ignored his expression and continued to ask, "I'm sure you're not giving me this name list without expecting anything in return. What do you want in exchange?"

The man looked up to meet her eyes. With no intention of concealing his motive, he cut straight to the chase. "I want to hire an assistant."

That's it? Upon hearing this, she couldn't help but ask, "Who?"

“Nico.”

Chapter 137

Nico? This name sounds rather familiar.

“How is he related to Noah?” Gwendolyn asked.

Maverick did not intend to hide it from her and truthfully responded, “He’s my subordinate.”

The woman propped her chin on her hand, resting her elbow on her knee. Tilting her head to one side, she observed him.

Her mannerism was exceptionally charming. Maverick had the opportunity to look at her delicate features from a close distance, and his heart skipped a beat at that.

Does she realize how enchanting she looks right now?

Just when he was lost in his thoughts, Gwendolyn piped up, “I can’t believe that your subordinates are still willing to stand by you during such a difficult time. You must have some private assets, am I right?”

Maverick’s private assets were nothing compared to his other secrets. However, he could not reveal them to her at this moment.

Nevertheless, he was a little happy. “Are you trying to manage my private assets as well? I don’t care much about money. If you want them, I can hand them all over to you.”

Gwendolyn rolled her eyes at him.

“I’m not interested in your money. I’m just curious why you didn’t use your money to reclaim the Wright residence. At least your mother and your sister can live more comfortably.”

The man simply lowered his head. "My mother is a mean woman, and my sister is spoiled. They bullied you, so I want to punish them."

His words were slightly startling. "I'm only your ex-wife, but they're your family. How can you treat them so callously?" asked Gwendolyn.

Nevertheless, Maverick had always been a man of principles.

"A mistake is a mistake. I won't show favoritism. This is also a good opportunity for them to improve their characters."

Although there was nothing wrong with what he said, Gwendolyn still felt something was not right.

"Let's not talk about Sheralyn, but Frida is your mother. Aren't you afraid she'll berate you for being unfilial?"

Maverick's head hung lower, and Gwendolyn could no longer see his expression.

He fell silent for a moment before saying, "She can endure this hardship. I'll help her if she can't take it anymore."

Hearing this, she had to admit that the way he handled the matter was impressive.

"I'm heading back to Angle now. You should get back to your work."

"All right."

Gwendolyn got up and walked toward the door. From the corner of her eye, she noticed that Maverick was still on his knee. "I'm leaving. Aren't you going to stand up?"

His face turned pale at her words. "My... legs have gone numb."

The woman gave a little chuckle. Ignoring him, she opened the door and walked out of the office.

Before leaving, she told Yulia that Maverick asked for an assistant.

Yulia was an efficient worker. That afternoon, Nico eagerly went into Maverick's office to report for work.

"Boss, you're really awesome! From now on, we won't have to sneak around to see each other. Ms. Shalders did not suspect a thing at all. You're amazing!"

Maverick was busy working on his computer when he was suddenly piqued by his subordinate's words. He then eyed Nico suspiciously.

"What do you mean by sneaking around? I'm dealing with serious matters."

At that, Maverick picked up a ballpoint pen from the table and threw it at Nico with all his might.

Nico did not dodge, causing the pen to hit his forehead. He rubbed his head, whimpering in pain.

"Boss, you're really cruel. I've got a concussion now. I demand compensation for my work injury."

"You're still fooling around?" Maverick cast an icy gaze at Nico as he picked up another pen.

The latter instantly cowered in fear. "My bad! I'm sorry! I won't do it again."

Although they liked to fool around with each other, they got down to business eventually.

Nico first inspected the office to make sure that no one was eavesdropping and that there were no surveillance devices in the room. Only after doing so did he hand over the information he obtained from Noah.

Maverick read through the well-organized materials carefully. The documents even included a timeline of events and Noah's confession.

"Boss, you can now prove your innocence to Ms. Shalders with this confession from Noah."

Maverick did not say a word, but his deep dark eyes narrowed.

He pondered for a while before tearing the document into pieces right in front of Nico.

Nico was astonished.

"Boss! What are you doing? This document can prove that you didn't harm Ms. Shalders."

Maverick's face was devoid of emotion as he uttered, "If I show her this evidence, the little bit of trust she has gained in me will be destroyed."

Nico did not understand what Maverick meant. Nevertheless, it broke his heart to see his hard work, which had now been reduced to torn pieces of paper, on the ground.

He had put in much effort into compiling the evidence, after all.

Yet, Maverick didn't even spare the torn pieces of paper a second glance. "When you handed the information to me, I realized that it's not impossible for Gwendolyn and her capable brothers to find out the truth. However, she didn't even bother to investigate this matter. This shows that in her heart, she's already convinced that I am the one who harmed her."

He sighed. It seemed that Gwendolyn did not trust him at all, and it would not be easy to regain her trust.

"Moreover, if I show this piece of evidence to her, she'll know that I've been investigating this matter behind her back. She'll also know that I've gone to look for Noah. Gwendolyn will only be more guarded against me in the future," Maverick added.

Realization struck Nico when he heard this, and he felt a little sorry for Maverick. "Well, in that case, Boss, you'll have to take the blame this time. I think one hundred lashes of the whip is not enough for that rascal, Noah. He deserves to be whipped two hundred times."

Half a month later, after a series of downturns, several projects of Wright Construction Group seemed to have picked up gradually.

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Gwendolyn was pleased to see the information Yulia gave her. “The operations in Wright Construction Group have stabilized based on the current situation. Looks like the matter of settling our scores with Lane Group can be put back on the agenda.”

Yulia nodded. “What do you plan to do, Boss?”

Gwendolyn’s lips curled into a smile as she responded, “From now on, whatever projects Lane Group wants to be involved in, we’ll snatch them all away as long as it’s within Wright Construction Group’s means.”

She had just finished speaking when an assistant knocked on the door. As the assistant walked in, she told Gwendolyn, “Ms. Shalders, Mr. Ferguson is here.”

“Okay.”

Yulia wisely took her leave just as Sherman entered the office. Both of them greeted each other politely.

When Yulia left the office, Sherman walked over and sat down on the chair opposite Gwendolyn’s desk.

Without looking up, Gwendolyn asked, “Why are you here?”

Sherman was smiling, his ears a tinge of red. "Gwendolyn, have you forgotten? My birthday is in three days."

Gwendolyn had forgotten completely about it.

"Should I wish you a happy birthday in advance? I remember that your parents used to throw parties for you on your birthdays. When do you plan to return to Salinsburgh?"

A faint blush formed on the man's face. "That was when we were kids. My parents told me not to go home unless I bring a partner back."

Gwendolyn instantly understood the purpose of his visit.

"You are the darling of the Ferguson family. How can your parents not allow you to go home? Don't make up stories to fool me."

Sherman was not discouraged even though his lies were exposed. "I know you won't be going back to Salinsburgh for the time being. How about having dinner alone with me in three days' time? Treat it as your birthday gift to me. I don't think that would be a problem. Am I right?"

His explanation sounded reasonable since they were friends. Gwendolyn did not have any reason to reject him and hence agreed to his request.

Meanwhile, on the twenty-third floor of Wright Construction Group's office building, Nico discreetly made his way into Maverick's office.

"Boss, I heard that Mr. Ferguson is here again. He's in the office on the top floor, talking to Ms. Shalders alone."

"Alone?" Maverick frowned, and his expression became stern.

There was bound to be trouble whenever Sherman visited Gwendolyn.

At that, Maverick sprang to his feet, pushed open the office door, and took the elevator to the top floor.

Meanwhile, Sherman had just left Gwendolyn's office and was waiting for the elevator to go downstairs.

As soon as the elevator reached the top floor, the two men met face-to-face when the door opened.

Sherman smiled and took the initiative to greet Maverick, "Mr. Wright, what a coincidence!"

Maverick's expression was icy, his tone impassive. "It's not a coincidence. I came here to look for you."

Chapter 138

In the end, the two men went to a quiet exit passageway within the building.

Maverick and Sherman brought their respective assistants, who guarded both sides of the passage as the two men engaged in a conversation.

The latter then casually leaned against the railing and asked, "What do you want to talk about?"

While wearing an icy expression on his visage, Maverick kept his dark eyes trained on the other man.

"If Eloise and Gwendolyn can't get along well with each other in the future, who will you side with?"

Sherman pondered for a moment before responding, "No, that won't happen because Eloise already knows Gwendolyn's identity. As long as Eloise still cares about Treyton, she won't argue with Gwendolyn again."

"Are you sure?" Maverick sneered, "From what I know, Treyton and Eloise have been engaged for two years but still haven't registered their marriage yet. That's because Treyton hasn't given his approval. Some time ago, he requested to call off the engagement, but Mr. Ferguson convinced him to keep it going."

“So what,” Sherman said, feeling baffled.

“You know Gwendolyn’s personality well. Eloise hurt her in the past, using rather vicious methods. There’s no way Gwendolyn can ever get along with Eloise in this lifetime, nor can Eloise accept being on the losing side. Thus, between your own sister and Gwendolyn, you can only choose one.”

At that point, Sherman’s patience was wearing thin.

“What’s the issue here? Can’t I have both of them? I’ll help mediate any problems between the two of them,” he insisted.

Maverick laughed upon hearing the man’s words. “You don’t like Gwendolyn as much as you think you do. You’re just fooling yourself. Your sister will eventually get married. The fact that you’re hesitating on this matter shows that you’re not worthy of Gwendolyn at all.”

Sherman retorted, “Ha! You’re the one who’s not worthy of her. From the day you signed that agreement with her, it’s destined that you and she can never remarry.”

A nonchalant smile tugged at the corners of Maverick’s lips. “So be it. It doesn’t matter if we can’t remarry. At least I can protect her using other means. Before she completely rejects me, I need to find a man who truly loves and cares for her, but that man will definitely not be you.”

Sherman’s expression softened considerably when he heard that. However, he continued to argue, “The person you’re talking about is me! I’m a great match for her in every aspect, and I’ve been secretly in love with her for many years. Besides, I don’t mind that she’s a divorcee, so how am I not good enough for her? How many men can say they’d do the same for her?”

Maverick frowned, shooting Sherman several glances. He even mentioned the fact that Gwendolyn’s been divorced. Deep down inside, he does mind that she’s a divorcee. It’s just that he has been numbing himself to fall in love with her and convincing himself that he must win her over.

Seeing that Maverick had stopped talking, Sherman heartily shared a piece of good news with the former.

“You still don’t know, do you? She has already agreed to have dinner with me alone, three days from now. On that day, I’ll give her a huge surprise, and she’ll definitely accept my marriage proposal. As for you, you’ll never get that chance!”

There was a hint of a provocative smile in Sherman’s elegant and amorous eyes, a rare sight for a usually dignified man like himself.

This triggered Maverick’s aggression as he grabbed Sherman by the latter’s collar and warned him in a low, menacing voice, “You’ve been pretending for quite some time, haven’t you? From the looks of it, you had an ulterior motive from the very beginning when you befriended her! Stay away from her from now on!”

Nonetheless, Sherman was unfazed and merely shook off Maverick’s hand. “Do you really think you can stop me?”

Treyton’s and Eloise’s engagement might not necessarily last until the end.

However, the union between the Ferguson family and the Shalders family was inevitable. Besides, Sherman truly liked Gwendolyn, and getting married would be a win-win situation.

Yet, Sherman would never tell Maverick those things.

The two continued to exchange warning glances at each other until they were pulled away by their respective assistants, thereby ending the smokeless war.

After Sherman left, Maverick returned to his office with Nico in tow.

At the thought of the forthcoming dinner date that Sherman had mentioned earlier, Maverick slammed his fist against the table in a fit of rage, his anger palpable.

Boom!

The startled Nico hurriedly asked, "Boss, what are you planning to do about Mr. Ferguson?"

Maverick became irritated just by the mention of that name. "Find a way to get rid of him within three days' time. Send him as far away as possible. Best keep him out of Fairlake so he doesn't bother me."

"Huh? But..." Nico was put in a tough spot. "He has the Ferguson family of Salinsburgh behind him. Boss, I—"

Maverick let out a snort and narrowed his eyes at his assistant. "It's just the Ferguson family. They're the weakest among the four major families in Salinsburgh. Besides, he's only accompanied by a few bodyguards during his visit to Fairlake this time around. It's obvious that he came here in secret. Don't tell me you can't even handle this?"

Nico pursed his lips. Boss is clearly exploiting me by giving me such a difficult task. He's so unreasonable and troublesome!

"Hm?" Upon letting out an imposing hum, Maverick glared at his assistant with a frown.

The latter instantly cowered, flashing a sheepish grin.

"I can definitely handle that! I'll discuss this with Neville and the others when I get back, but we might need your cooperation when the time comes," he said.

Maverick's expression finally returned to normal. "All right."

Throughout the past two weeks, it was obvious Gwendolyn had gained a little bit of trust in Maverick as she didn't instruct the two bodyguards. William and Quinton, to watch over him all day. Maverick was quite pleased with this.

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Before long, three days had passed in the blink of an eye.

Since Gwendolyn had plans to have dinner with Sherman that night, she decided to leave work an hour earlier.

She had just finished tidying up the desk and was about to leave when she received a call from Elven, who was at Bay Villa.

“Ms. Shalders, Mr. Wright accidentally injured himself, and the bleeding from his waist area won’t stop. Please come back quickly to take a look at his injury!”

Gwendolyn thought about it for a moment and felt something amiss. She asked, “If he’s injured, shouldn’t you look for a doctor? What’s the point of me coming back?”

“Mr. Wright said he got this injury back when he was looking for you in Lightspring Mountains, and he accidentally aggravated it while doing the chores today. His physical condition is not as good as it used to be, and I’m helping him to stop the bleeding. Are you sure you don’t want to come back and take a look?”

An old injury on the waist? That injury was caused by Asher’s subordinate.

“Okay, I understand.”

After hanging up the call, Gwendolyn tried calling Sherman’s phone, but a voice message indicated he was currently out of the service area.

Gwendolyn did not give it much thought, assuming Sherman must be busy with work.

There was an hour left before the agreed-upon time, so she decided to drive back to Bay Villa first since it was still early.

Upon reaching the second floor, she was met with the sight of Elven busy bandaging Maverick’s waist. Despite having multiple layers of gauze wrapped around his waist, there was still a faint trace of blood seeping through the bandages.

Gwendolyn walked over and sat down on the chair next to Maverick. “What happened? Didn’t your wound heal already? How did you get injured again?”

Upon noticing the woman's return, Maverick beamed at her. "Since today is a special day, I wanted to cook a few more dishes. I accidentally scuffed my waist in the kitchen while doing so."

Gwendolyn was confused. A special day? Isn't today Sherman's birthday? How could it be a special day for me?

Seeing the woman deep in thought, Maverick continued to say, "Have you forgotten? Six years ago today, you were adopted by Grandpa and brought back to the Wright residence from the orphanage. That was also the first— No, the second time we met."

Gwendolyn was astonished. I don't even remember that. How does he still remember that event?

Maverick seemed to have seen through her thoughts. "Ever since I realized that I truly like and care about you, I've kept everything about your past firmly in my heart," he said.

Gwendolyn remained silent, showing no emotion.

After the bandaging was completed, Maverick inched closer to her and looked at her with anticipation in his eyes.

"Gwendolyn, when you first came to the Wright residence six years ago, I wasn't there for you, so let me make it up to you this time. I've prepared a lot of dishes. Have dinner with me tonight, okay?"

Gwendolyn furrowed her brows, and her expression gradually became serious.

"I don't want to."

Chapter 139

Maverick was slightly taken aback. He hadn't expected her to refuse him outright.

Gwendolyn went on to say, "For me, those years were filled with darkness, and it all started from the day Old Mr. Wright brought me into the Wright residence. Old Mr. Wright was kind to me, but he didn't

trust me completely either. When Frida and Dexter accused me of stealing the jewelry, Old Mr. Wright didn't say a word in my defense. Although I don't hold a grudge against him for that, there's no way I could commemorate the day I first entered the Wright residence!"

Her gaze was so cold that one could feel the chill coming off her.

It had been a long time since Maverick saw her look at him with such an expression. Flustered, he quickly apologized, "I'm sorry. I didn't know how bad things were for you..."

Gwendolyn was reasonable enough not to take her anger out on him. She pointed out placidly, "You were probably working overtime at Wright Construction Group back then, so it's only normal that you were oblivious to it. That said, there's no need for us to attend this dinner for memories' sake."

As she spoke, she glanced at the time and realized it was getting late.

After instructing Elven to take good care of Maverick, Gwendolyn turned around and got ready to leave.

Maverick quickly grabbed her hand and asked, "Gwendolyn, do you know that Sherman is planning to propose to you tonight?"

Gwendolyn wasn't surprised, but she still turned around and asked, "How did you know?"

Maverick said truthfully, "I met with him when he came to Wright Construction Group to find you the last time. He told me about it. I personally find him too soft-hearted. He might be a good friend, but he definitely won't make a good husband. You won't be happy with him."

To this end, Gwendolyn had to agree with Maverick. Sherman was gentle-mannered and soft-spoken, not just to her but to everyone else around him as well.

However, she found it ironic that Maverick was the one telling her this.

“Whether he’s a good husband or not may still be uncertain, but I know you’re definitely not husband material. So, what gives you the right to say these things?” she demanded icily.

All the blood drained from Maverick’s face.

After a pause, he finally met her steely gaze again. “As your former husband, I failed in my duties and caused you pain. I let you down, and I’m sorry about that—”

She pried his hand off and cut him off bluntly, “There’s no need to apologize. Once our one-year agreement is fulfilled, we’ll be even, and our paths will never cross again. They’ll become parallel lines.”

Maverick’s face grew paler by the second as he watched her struggle free from his grasp and leave the villa.

Does this mean she actually likes Sherman?

Over at the seven-star Dunearn Hotel at Fairlake, Sherman had booked the entire restaurant on one of the higher floors of the hotel and filled it with nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine red roses. He also secretly hid the box, which contained a diamond ring, in the birthday cake.

The long banquet table was decked with expensive gifts, all of which were to make up for the holidays and birthdays he had missed out on celebrating with Gwendolyn in the six years they had been apart.

Sherman carefully examined the little surprises he had planted in the room, making sure everything would go off without a hitch. He then straightened his tie and decided he would start practicing his

speech.

This was already his third confession to Gwendolyn since coming to Fairlake for her. The last two times had either been too hastily done or gotten interfered with by someone else.

This time, he was determined to succeed.

He was still deep in thought when, suddenly, a man in a suit and leather shoes came up to him. At first glance, the man looked like a bodyguard.

"Hello, Mr. Ferguson. I am Ms. Shalders' bodyguard," the man introduced himself to Sherman.

"How come I've never seen you before?" Sherman asked.

Neville's eyes crinkled at the sides as he explained with a smile, "I'm William. I was sent out on an errand by Ms. Shalders when you visited Bay Villa the last time. I believe it was Quinton and Ryan who escorted you back."

Sherman returned his smile. "Oh, I see." He did not suspect Neville at all, given how the latter was a good-looking young fellow with pleasant manners.

Since Gwendolyn was very particular about appearances, her bodyguards were all fairly good-looking. There was no reason for Sherman to doubt that Neville was one of them.

Neville continued, "Yes, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Shalders said she has prepared a surprise birthday gift for you and would like to invite you to the rooftop to look."

Sherman was delighted to hear that. "Well, wouldn't want her efforts to go to waste. Lead the way."

He followed Neville out to the rooftop veranda. As soon as his two bodyguards saw him leaving, they immediately hurried after him.

Neville couldn't help but notice this and questioned, "Ms. Shalders is waiting for you out there, Mr. Ferguson. Are you sure you want your bodyguards to come along and spoil her fun?"

After giving it some thought, Sherman thought it would be rather inappropriate for his bodyguards to tag along.

He would not be able to enjoy his romantic moment with Gwendolyn with his bodyguards hovering over them.

As such, he said to his bodyguards, "Just wait here. I'll be fine; it's just the rooftop."

"Yes, Mr. Ferguson," the bodyguards replied.

The elevator at Dunearn Hotel did not go directly to the rooftop. To get there, one had to take the fire exit.

Presently, Neville opened the door to the rooftop for Sherman, bowing as he gestured for Sherman to go outside.

Sherman gave him a modest smile, then strode out the door.

To his surprise, the rooftop was utterly empty, with nothing to be found.

It was only then that Sherman realized something was amiss. "Where's Gwendolyn? You lied to me!" he snapped at Neville.

He was about to turn around and leave when suddenly, a man dressed in a staff uniform sprang out from behind him and clapped a white cloth over his nose and mouth.

Shermon carefully examined the little surprises he had planted in the room, making sure everything would go off without a hitch. He then straightened his tie and decided he would start practicing his

speech.

This was already his third confession to Gwendolyn since coming to Fairloke for her. The last two times had either been too hastily done or gotten interfered with by someone else.

This time, he was determined to succeed.

He was still deep in thought when, suddenly, a man in a suit and leather shoes came up to him. At first glance, the man looked like a bodyguard.

"Hello, Mr. Ferguson. I am Ms. Sholders' bodyguard," the man introduced himself to Shermon.

"How come I've never seen you before?" Shermon asked.

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Shermon struggled at first, but he blacked out within seconds.

The man dressed in the staff uniform removed his mask. It was Nico.

Neville asked, "Where do we take him?"

Nico thought about this for a moment, then said, "We'll have the others use the employees' exit and take this guy out to Fairlake Pier. Then, we'll put him on an export cargo ship. Boss did say to send him as far away as possible."

"Uh..." Neville was a bit worried. "Will it be all right to throw him onto the cargo ship penniless? He is a scion who's had everything handed to him since he was born."

Nico reached out and smacked Neville on the head. "Why are you worried about him? He's an able-bodied fellow who can find a way to make a living. Besides, do you really think the Ferguson family won't find out about this sooner or later? He's lucky that he's only getting thrown onto a cargo ship after he called Ms. Shalders a divorcée!"

"Then what do we do about the two bodyguards from the Ferguson family?" Neville asked.

"I'll take care of it," Nico said.

The two of them worked out their next moves and proceeded with their own tasks.

While Gwendolyn was driving to Dunearn Hotel, a message suddenly popped up on her phone. It was from Sherman.

He wrote: Gwendolyn, an urgent matter suddenly came up, and my family wants me to handle it. I'm afraid we'll have to reschedule our dinner plans. Sorry about the inconvenience.

She frowned at this. What urgent matter could the Ferguson family have that they would ask him to return so late?

Moreover, Sherman has never been the type to break a promise.

Gwendolyn thought something was off. She pulled up at the roadside and called Sherman's number.

However, all she heard from the other line was a mechanical female voice informing her that Sherman's phone had been switched off.

He got on the plane pretty fast.

She didn't think too much about this and turned the car around, making her way back to Bay Villa.

Maverick was elated to see Gwendolyn return home.

While Gwendolyn thought his attentiveness was a little odd, she simply brushed it off and had a few bites of dinner, then retired to the upstairs bedroom.

The next day, she and Maverick went to the company as usual.

In the Wright Construction Group CEO's Office, Gwendolyn was working with Maverick and Yulia to come up with a detailed plan for Lane Group's preliminary project selection when William frantically knocked on the office door.

"Ms. Shalders!" he called out. When he saw Maverick and Yulia present in the office, his words came to a halt.

Gwendolyn noticed the concern in his eyes. Although she found it strange, she made up an excuse and dismissed Maverick and Yulia.

She waited until she was alone with William before asking, "Did something happen?"

William leaned in close to her ear and whispered, "I just got a report from someone at Fairlake Female Prison. Natasha has gone missing!"

Chapter 140

Missing? Gwendolyn was puzzled.

She furrowed her brow. "How could someone who was in prison just disappear like that?"

William shook his head. "She disappeared during the half-hour activity time after dinner yesterday. It was as if she had evaporated from the face of the earth, leaving no trace behind."

"No trace?" Gwendolyn chuckled and responded, "How could an adult just disappear into thin air? It's impossible not to find any leads. We must investigate thoroughly! Who has visited her recently? How long did they stay? We need to examine every detail and not leave anything out!"

"Understood," replied William.

"Hold on." As William was about to leave, Gwendolyn called out to him. Looking very serious, she said, "Go and check all the recent records of Noah's visits."

"Do you suspect..." Before William could finish speaking, Gwendolyn's gaze grew colder and colder.

I hope I'm just overthinking it.

That afternoon, the rain poured heavily.

As sunset approached, the rain not only didn't stop, but it grew even heavier.

The heavy rain splattered against the windowpane, making it appear as if the once unblemished glass was now divided into a series of cracks.

The weather was terribly gloomy as if silently conveying something.

Gwendolyn stood by the floor-to-ceiling window, gazing out at the rain with a blank expression while her mind raced with unknown thoughts.

William was busy the entire morning and afternoon, only returning to report to Gwendolyn as evening approached. "Ms. Shalders, I've thoroughly checked all the records and found that in the past month and a half, only one person has visited both Natasha and Noah separately."

Gwendolyn's face darkened. "Who?"

"It's... Nico." William handed her the documents respectfully and continued, "And not long ago, Noah disappeared from prison for an hour. It's said that he accidentally wandered into the freezer and was locked in by the staff before they left, but..."

"But what?" Gwendolyn asked impatiently.

"When he was found, he was covered in blood and had numerous wounds. It seemed like he had been beaten with something like a horsewhip or a similar object... And apparently, Noah and Nico are both under Mr. Wright's command," William continued.

Gwendolyn furrowed her brows as she listened. "Why is this only being reported now?"

"It was thought to be just an accidental locking in the freezer at the time. Plus, he was only beaten up because he had a feud with one of the gang leaders in prison. Since he wasn't actually missing, everyone thought it wasn't a big issue." William answered.

Where would the prison get whips like that? It's obvious that he was taken out and then brought back! The meaning of this is self-evident, Gwendolyn thought.

She suddenly recalled the unusual behavior of Maverick when they returned to Bay Villa yesterday afternoon.

Gwendolyn couldn't help but suspect that he was deliberately stalling her, and perhaps he was afraid that she would discover Natasha's disappearance.

She checked the investigation form and found that Natasha had disappeared during that exact period.

The coincidence was too much to ignore.

Then when she returned to Bay Villa, Maverick had a look of joy on his face again.

Perhaps he was celebrating Natasha's successful escape from prison.

Haha. I thought he had sincerely repented during this period of time, but it turns out that it was all to divert my attention and save Natasha. All that talk about taking responsibility for one's mistakes and facing the consequences was just a load of crap, except when it comes to protecting Natasha, huh? It's unreasonable! The more Gwendolyn thought about it, the angrier she got, and she fiercely knocked over a stack of file folders on the edge of the table onto the ground.

With a loud clatter, the entire room was left in disarray.

"Ms. Shalders..." William was taken aback as he witnessed Gwendolyn's outburst for the first time, and he took two steps back in fear.

Gwendolyn narrowed her eyes coldly. "Return to the villa!"

To prevent her from driving recklessly in her anger, William took on the role of the driver.

The rain was pouring down in torrents, creating a loud and distracting noise against the car window.

As the rain poured down relentlessly, Gwendolyn's anger only grew worse, fueled by the unrelenting downpour.

When they arrived at the villa, William was about to grab an umbrella and help Gwendolyn out of the car, but he saw that she had already gotten out on her own and walked under the rain into the garden.

William was shocked and hurriedly followed her. "Ms. Shalders! Let me hold the umbrella for you! You don't want to catch a cold!"

In the villa, Maverick was cooking in the kitchen when he suddenly heard William's shout, catching him off guard.

Checking the time, Maverick realized that Gwendolyn had arrived home twenty minutes earlier than usual today. He was delighted and washed his hands after cutting the vegetables before heading out to welcome her.

Stepping out of the kitchen, Maverick was greeted by the sight of Gwendolyn opening the door and entering the villa, with her clothes and hair drenched in rain and her slender shoulders completely wet.

Maverick quickly went to the bathroom and grabbed a clean towel to help Gwendolyn dry herself. "Did you forget to bring an umbrella? Why did you walk in the rain? It's getting colder these days, so be careful not to catch a cold. I'll make you a bowl of soup later, okay?"

Not saying a word, Gwendolyn observed Maverick intently, her lips firmly pressed together.

As he spouts words of care for me, his face shows no traces of embarrassment. The affection and love in his eyes are almost completely undisguised.

He's trying to divert me and seek the opportunity to rescue Natasha. What a clever tactic! His acting is impressive! Gwendolyn suppressed her anger and kept her thoughts to herself.

Noticing that Gwendolyn's mood was progressively deteriorating, Maverick found it peculiar and asked, "Gwendolyn, what's wrong?"

Gwendolyn's lips curled into a smile, but her eyes betrayed a sense of coldness. "There are too many fallen leaves outside in the garden. You should go and sweep them up."

Maverick glanced out the window subconsciously. "But it's raining heavily outside..."

"Come back inside once you're done sweeping." Ignoring Maverick's words, Gwendolyn turned and headed upstairs.

Maverick sensed that something was off with Gwendolyn's mood that night. Perhaps she was dealing with some sort of frustrating situation and needed to vent to him.

He let out a helpless smile and went to the backyard to get a broom, then started sweeping the fallen leaves.

Just minutes after stepping out into the rain, he was completely drenched.

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With winter approaching, the leaves were falling in abundance, especially after heavy rains. The leaves fell indiscriminately, making it nearly impossible to sweep them all up.

Gwendolyn stood by the window on the third floor, lost in thought and feeling numb. If Maverick really loves Natasha, he should have rescued her from prison right from the beginning. We could have been enemies from the start, confronting each other directly. I can accept that he doesn't love me or even hates me, but he shouldn't have deceived me while using the pretext of paying off his debts through loving me. That's utterly shameless!

Gwendolyn clenched her fists tightly, with a wave of raging anger burning inside her heart.

Elven was called into the room by her, and they stood together by the window to watch Maverick sweeping the fallen leaves in the garden.

Without waiting for Gwendolyn to speak, Elven expressed her concern. "Ms. Shalders, Mr. Wright was injured in the waist yesterday, and this rain is too cold. Will he be able to endure it for long, given his physical condition?"

Gwendolyn stared at the person in the garden and sneered, "Does he look like he has a waist injury to you?"

"Ms. Shalders, what do you mean?" Elven was puzzled.

Without answering, Gwendolyn continued to ask, "Did you see his injury when he was hurt yesterday?"

After considering it for a moment, Elven replied truthfully, "No. Mr. Wright summoned me into the room, and when I arrived, he was already in the middle of wrapping the bandage around it. There was some blood seeping through, but it couldn't have been a fake wound... Could it?"

Could it? Gwendolyn wondered.

“Let him endure another hour in the rain. If he still can’t sweep the leaves clean, then let him come inside,” she instructed.

“Understood,” Elven responded.

The rain was pouring down heavily, causing low visibility.

Despite keeping his head down, Maverick could sense that someone had been staring at him intently for quite some time.

It’s probably Gwendolyn.

However, she felt like a stranger to him that day. Her demeanor was colder than ever before.

He wondered if Gwendolyn had discovered his role in Sherman’s disappearance.

Lost in his thoughts, he didn’t realize that he had obediently been sweeping the fallen leaves outside for an hour.

It wasn’t until Elven went out and called him to go to Gwendolyn’s room to talk that he snapped out of his reverie and returned the broom to the backyard.

Before entering the house, he halted in his tracks.

He was dripping wet and didn’t want to dirty the freshly mopped floor, let alone Gwendolyn’s room.

Therefore, he decided to stand at the doorway and wring the water stains out of his clothes and pants before entering. Then, he used the towel Gwendolyn had just used to wipe herself at the doorway to roughly dry his hair.

He looked as if he had just taken a shower, with his short hair looking neat and clean. His white shirt clung tightly to his body, revealing his muscular abs. However, due to the rain, his lips appeared slightly pale, and he looked a bit sickly and fragile.

Elven stood quietly by the side, watching.

Seeing how the man had tidied up every detail of his appearance, Elven couldn't help but sigh quietly.

I'm afraid he doesn't know what's awaiting him inside.