

Her Riches 261

Chapter 261 Whose Problem

Cedrick's expression turned dark, and he didn't say a word.

Nico continued, "Boss, you should restrain yourselves. Overindulging in your desires can harm your health!"

Cedrick's expression darkened further.

Nico belatedly realized that his recent pay rise was about to say goodbye to him.

Realizing the potential consequences, he quickly corrected himself, "I mean, if Mr. Asher were to discover this, it would be difficult for Ms. Gwendolyn when she returns to the Harris residence. It could lead to a significant uproar. Boss, considering your current health condition, if you were to sustain a severe injury again, there might not be anyone capable of rescuing you."

The truth is always bitter to swallow.

Nico's words weren't pleasant to the ears, but he was telling the truth.

Cedrick wasn't a tyrant, so he gave a nod in agreement.

He soon received an urgent email from the Federal Bureau of Investigation about Chanaea's border.

Cedrick clicked into it and put on a stern expression. "An organization is causing trouble at the border. Pack up, and we'll leave tomorrow night."

"Got it, Boss."

When Gwendolyn woke up, it was almost noon.

Cedrick knew she was exhausted and didn't disturb her so she could get more sleep.

Holding her waist, she carefully got off the bed and discovered her legs were shaking.

Following the morning incident, she had been deeply traumatized. She learned the hard way that she should never challenge a man's pride in such matters or face dire consequences.

Her subordinate from Shadow Bell had already organized the information regarding Evelyn and sent it to her email.

Gwendolyn clicked into the file and read it carefully.

Evelyn was nineteen years old. Her father had died some time ago, so she was brought up by her mother. She made her debut in the entertainment industry at the tender age of fourteen, showcasing her remarkable talent as an actress and earning international acclaim through numerous awards. Speculation circulated that she had a wealthy benefactor, which explained the abundant resources at her disposal. However, the identity of her benefactor, her parents, and even her surname was unknown.

Gwendolyn's expression turned icy when she saw the several unknowns in the report.

The report she had received was filled with irrelevant details, lacking the crucial information she truly needed.

She immediately made a call. "Reinvestigate her thoroughly. I require comprehensive information. Find

out when her father passed away and the cause of his death. I want to uncover every detail, including her full surname. If she went to the trouble of concealing her identity, there must be a significant secret behind it."

"Calm down, Boss. I'll get to it right away!"

Gwendolyn ended the call and stared at Evelyn's details, her gaze darkening.

Since I took over Shadow Bell, they have never failed in investigating anything. If they couldn't even uncover her identity, that means that Evelyn's backers consist of bigshots from influential families. Who could her benefactor be? She has covered her tracks well, huh?

Gwendolyn had no choice but to wait for Shadow Bell to revert back to her.

Gathering her thoughts, she washed up and put on some makeup.

Jennifer was heading to a shoot at Barner today. It was her first job after Walter's incident, so Gwendolyn planned on visiting her at work today.

She walked out of the villa and was about to get into the car when Valentino and Logan came to her.

"Hello, Old Mr. Jenson."

Valentino greeted her with a warm smile and nodded approvingly. He came over to her with the help of his walking stick and asked, "Gwendolyn, you've been staying with Cedrick recently. Have you adjusted well to the new living arrangement?"

"Yes, don't worry. Caddy treats me well."

"I'm glad to hear that," Valentino replied with a satisfied smile.

His gaze traveled down Gwendolyn's face and settled on her stomach. "Considering how harmonious you two seem, why haven't you conceived yet? Kiddo, please avoid taking any contraceptive measures as they can be detrimental to your health. Don't worry. If you become pregnant, I promise to organize a magnificent wedding for you."

Gwendolyn felt the tips of her ears turning red hearing an elder broach such intimate matters. She responded with an awkward smile, saying, "I understand, Old Mr. Jenson."

Pregnant? I dare not get pregnant. If Asher finds out, he'll break my legs before I give birth.

Valentino continued offering his advice and insights on marriage, and Gwendolyn politely acknowledged his input.

After Valentino left, she looked at her tummy.

She feared Asher would beat her up if she were to get pregnant. However, a part of her remained curious about the experience of giving birth to a baby.

This is strange. Cedrick and I had sex so many times without using condoms. Why am I not pregnant yet? Is there something wrong with my health? Or is it Cedrick?

Having learned her lesson from the morning incident, she dared not pose the question to Cedrick directly. She feared that he might perceive her question as a challenge to his masculine pride and end up teaching her another harsh lesson.

Perhaps I'm not fated to have a child yet.

She let out a long sigh and immediately made her way to the shooting set.

Upon arrival, she noticed a hunched figure at the corner of the door.

Despite the mask and cap concealing her face, the person's short, grey hair exposed her identity as an elderly woman.

However, when Gwendolyn came nearer, she noticed that the skin on the back of the lady's hand was fair and tightly textured, contradicting the appearance of an elderly woman.

She was about to take a closer look when the “elderly woman” stealthily slipped into the building through the staff lane, taking advantage of a moment when the staff was not paying attention.

Jennifer’s shooting was in progress on the twenty-second floor of the Barner building.

The photoshoot for this month’s magazine cover had already been completed, with—Jennifer delivering an exceptional performance. Impressed by her skills, the director at Barner decided to enlist her for several in—page column shoots.

Everyone was focused on the shoot, unaware of an “elderly lady” emerging from the restroom. Clutching a bucket of dirty water that had been used to mop the floor, she quietly positioned herself behind them. The lady’s vicious gaze was fixed on Jennifer the moment she entered the scene.

Quietly, she inched nearer to Jennifer without attracting attention.

“All right, that’s a wrap for this set. We still have two more sets to go, but let’s take a thirty-minute break. Great job, Jennifer! You’re doing fantastic!” the director praised, acknowledging her performance.

The rest of the staff clapped in unison.

Jennifer bowed to everyone. “Thank you, everyone. My manager prepared some coffee, so please help yourselves.”

The staff cheered and went to her manager to get some coffee.

As Jennifer was engrossed in her bow, the timing was perfect. Unbeknownst to her, a malicious glare flashed in the eyes of the “elderly woman” lurking in the corner.

“Jennifer Weller! I want your reputation ruined!”

Without warning, the bucket of filthy water was thrown in Jennifer’s direction.

Caught off guard, she couldn't move away in time and was drenched from head to toe. The exquisite haute couture gown provided by Barner was now smeared with dirt and grime.

The dirt and grime stung Jennifer's eyes, causing her to instinctively rub them in an attempt to alleviate the pain. Despite her efforts, she couldn't open her eyes due to the intense discomfort.

Everyone had walked away to get coffee and couldn't react in time. The "elderly lady" immediately tossed the bucket away and pulled out the dagger she had prepared earlier, charging toward Jennifer. "Die, you b*tch!"

Many staff screamed in terror at the sight of the dagger, but they were too far away to stop the attacker.

"Be careful!"

Fortunately, the bloodshed didn't occur.

Before the dagger could stab into Jennifer's stomach, it came to a halt.

A pair of hands had emerged out of nowhere to grab the wrist of the "elderly lady."

Chapter 262 Dark Path

A pair of dark eyes stared back at her.

"Y-You... It's you..."

Gwendolyn's red-lacquered lips lifted into a sneer. "Lisa, I didn't expect you to fall so far!"

She twisted Lisa's wrist with a snap.

"Ouch! My wrist!"

Lisa's face contorted in pain. The dagger in her hand clattered to the ground.

Gwendolyn raised her high-heeled foot and kicked her hard across her thigh.

Lisa fell to the ground. She scrambled around but could not muster the strength to stand up again.

The assistant, manager, and staff watching the scene were all frightened.

"Why are you still standing there like an idiot? Go and help Jennifer wash up!" Gwendolyn growled.

"Yes, yes, yes!"

The assistant quickly grabbed a dry towel, wrapped it around Jennifer's body, and led her to the bathroom.

Lisa was dissatisfied to see that her plan had failed.

She had used the last of her savings to get Jennifer's schedule for her Barner shoot.

"Why did you have to save her? I was ridiculed by the entire network! I had to leave Papilio Girls! I owe millions of dollars! All of this is because of her! Damn her!" Lisa screamed hysterically at Gwendolyn.

Gwendolyn snorted, still sneering.

"I am the one who leaked your nude photo and issued the order to remove you from Papilio Girls. I am the one who did this to you. Well, I'm standing in front of you right now. Come and kill me if you dare."

Lisa was shocked to hear those words. She stared wordlessly at Gwendolyn for a long while. Finally, she gritted her teeth against the pain, staggered over to Gwendolyn, and reached down to pick up the dagger on the floor.

“I’m going to kill you! I’ll kill you!”

Her fingers were wrapped around the hilt of the dagger but she could not lift it. Gwendolyn’s high-heeled foot was stepping down hard on the blade.

“Lisa, you’ve fallen from grace today due to your own doing. If you had concentrated all your energy on being the best idol, you would have reached stardom.”

Lisa’s eyes welled up with tears that pooled and then rolled down her cheeks in twin streams. Gwendolyn went on, “You had a bright future, yet you chose this dark path. You bullied Jennifer. You knew that Jennifer and Walter were in a relationship and yet you seduced him and started an affair with him. Do you think Walter would help you if something were to happen to you? That man can’t even

protect himself. How can he take care of you? The two of you miserable b*stards have the same evil heart!”

“No! No! This is all Jennifer’s fault! We are all part of a group! Why does she get the chance to go solo? Why does she get interviews by herself? This is not fair!” Lisa screamed in a heart-wrenching voice

and collapsed to the ground, clutching her chest.

Gwendolyn’s face remained emotionless. “Jennifer is an S-level artist. She is the ace of Angle. The contract that the two of you signed is completely different. From the very beginning, her path and yours were never the same. You failed to position yourself well!”

Lisa sat on the ground. Her face fell in despair. She was stunned and kept repeating the same words. “No, it’s not my fault...”

Gwendolyn pulled her icy eyes away from Lisa and glanced around the room. "You all witnessed it. She brought a knife not just to kill Jennifer, but also to kill me! Somebody please call the police and get them to take her away quickly. Let's not ruin the atmosphere here."

"I'll call the police!" said one of the staff immediately.

Lisa was stunned. Then, realization dawned on her.

Gwendolyn had tricked her.

If she only attempted to kill Jennifer, she would be jailed for four to five years at most. However, if she was charged with an attempt to kill Gwendolyn, her life would become miserable.

Asher was Gwendolyn's older brother, and Cedrick was Gwendolyn's fiancé.

If she were found guilty of such a crime, those two men would not let her get away with it.

"Ms. Harris, I was wrong! I know now that I was wrong! Please give me a chance to make it right. Please don't send me to prison! Please!"

She crawled toward Gwendolyn's feet, begging pathetically. She reached out to grab the hem of Gwendolyn's skirt, but Gwendolyn stepped out of her reach.

Gwendolyn looked down at her contemptuously. Her eyes were cold and emotionless.

Jennifer had already washed up and changed into a clean dress. She walked out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around her hair.

When Gwendolyn saw that Jennifer was okay, she breathed a sigh of relief and said to Lisa, "You shouldn't be apologizing to me. You should be apologizing to Jennifer. If she forgives you, I'll consider letting you go."

Hope lit up in Lisa's heart as she knelt down in front of Jennifer to beg for her forgiveness.

"Jennifer, I was wrong! I shouldn't have treated you so badly! I shouldn't have destroyed your relationship with Wafer! You can punish me however you wish, but please don't let Ms. Harris send me to prison!

Please!"

Jennifer clenched her fists tightly.

The memory of her catching Walter and Lisa in bed together flashed before her eyes. How arrogant they were back then! After doing such an unforgivable thing, how dare she begs for a second chance?

She looked down at Lisa's pathetic appearance silently. Her face was red and splotchy from crying. She kept quiet for a long while.

"Jennifer, if I hadn't stopped her, she would have killed you. Do you really believe that she will change her ways? Are you really willing to forgive her?" Gwendolyn said when she saw Jennifer's hesitation.

Jennifer's misgivings faded away. "No, I can never forgive her! Lisa, you're not a child anymore! You should've thought about the consequences before you acted! Now, you must be responsible for what you've done!"

"No. No, Jennifer! Please, help me!" Lisa cried out desperately.

She did not want to go to prison for what she had done.

If she did, she would definitely be tortured to death in there.

Jennifer's heart did not soften. She merely watched silently as Lisa was dragged away.

Gwendolyn approached her and smiled in satisfaction. "You have grown a lot after going through so much hardship. That's a good thing!"

Jennifer reached out to hold Gwendolyn's hand, touched by her kindness.

Although this episode had delayed the shooting schedule, Jennifer quickly recovered from the shock and continued with the shoot.

That evening, when Gwendolyn returned to the villa, Cedrick was already at home.

He was seated on the couch, watching television. His slender legs were casually crossed, and his entire demeanor exuded relaxation.

Gwendolyn was surprised to see him at home. "You got off work so early today? Isn't it busy at Jenson Group?"

"I got home early." He had a reason for being home early. "Gwenny, I have an urgent mission from the Federal Bureau of Investigation tomorrow night. I have to go to the border."

"Tomorrow night?" Gwendolyn sat down beside him. "So soon? When will you be back?"

"I'll have to be there for at least three to five days."

Gwendolyn lowered her eyes. "Okay. I actually made a hospital appointment for the day after tomorrow. I thought of going with you."

Cedrick pulled her into his arms and looked her over. "You look fine. Why are you going to the hospital? Is everything okay?"

"I'm fine."

Gwendolyn smiled awkwardly as she recalled Valentino's words earlier that day.

"I met Old Mr. Jenson today. He really wanted... to have a grandchild. To be honest, I'm also starting to feel worried. We've been together for a while. Why haven't I conceived yet?"

Cedrick followed her eyes and gazed at her stomach. His eyes betrayed nothing, and he was quiet for a while.

We have made love countless times, and yet your womb remains empty. It's because of me. Something is wrong with my body...

Chapter 263 Free Meals

There was a high possibility that the S404 RNA virus in him would be transmitted to his child even if she did get pregnant.

In other words, his child would suffer.'

Yet, he could not bring himself to ask Gwendolyn to take the pills, and he was also afraid that Gwendolyn would notice something amiss.

There were pills catered for men on the market with little side effects, so he would always take them secretly before they made love to each other.

Gwendolyn remained oblivious to his thoughts, her mind preoccupied with memories of her consuming copious amounts of high-alcohol content beverages over three consecutive days in Fairlake. It had resulted in a prolonged recovery period for her.

She wondered if that was the time she ruined her health and her chances to bear a child.

“Ceddy, you’re strong. In comparison to you, I’m weak. I want to go to the hospital for a full-body checkup. That way, I can give you my healthy all.”

Cedrick’s pupils constricted. Slowly, his face went pale.

He felt as if someone was gripping his heart.

It was suffocating.

Gwendolyn wanted to be healthy for him, but he could not do the same.

He probably could never live a healthy life.

All of a sudden, a wave of guilt hit him, and the resulting pain surged through his entire being.

Am I wasting her time?

When Gwendolyn noticed the pallor of his face, she gently touched his cheek and asked, “Ceddy, what’s the matter?”

Cedrick forced a smile. “I’m fine. It’ll be good for you to do a full-body checkup, but I have tasks to work on, so I won’t be able to keep you company. I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay. Once you leave, I’ll go and stay at the Harris residence for a few days. I’ll ask Jennifer or Sienna to keep me company.”

Cedrick nodded in response and forced away his feelings of loneliness.

“By the way, Ceddy, things are tumultuous by the border. You’re going there to fight, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Then, you have to be careful. Completing the mission is secondary. Your safety is your utmost priority. Take care of yourself and don’t get hurt.”

Cedrick nodded guiltily. “Okay.”

When Treyton returned to the villa, he was greeted by the fragrance of food just as he stepped into the garden.

It was a peculiar sensation. It felt as if he had a wife who was waiting to have a meal with him at home and as if there was someone in this world who would always rely on him and think of him.

It was not an unwelcomed feeling.

When he opened the door, he saw the piping hot food on the dining table.

Just as Jennifer brought the last dish to the dining table—a pot of meat stew-she sneezed. Upon turning around, she spotted Treyton’s handsome face.

“Mr. Harris, you’re back at the right time. I was worried that the food will turn cold if you run late.”

As Treyton took a seat by the dining table, he recalled her sneeze earlier.

“I heard about what happened to you at Barner. Lisa even tried to throw wastewater at you. Were you frightened?”

Jennifer flashed him a smile and said, “It’s just a trivial matter. I’m used to this since young. The more they bully me, the stronger I get. In a way, I’m like a roach. Indestructible.”

Right then, the two’s eyes met.

Treyton was moved by the way she simply accepted things and went on with life.

The next day, at the Ferguson residence, Eloise's bodyguard, Gunnar, came to knock on Eloise's room door upon receiving some news.

"Ms. Ferguson, the man you sent to spy on Mr. Treyton at the Harris residence has returned. He said that..."

Eloise was in the middle of putting on her earrings when he came in, and she turned around to shoot him a glare. "What did he say? Go on."

"Mr. Treyton has been sending a young woman off every day lately, and that young woman leaves the area in a van. The man you sent doesn't recognize the young woman, but she looks like a celebrity. He's guessing that she's staying with Mr. Treyton."

Clink!

Eloise's hand shook, and her earring fell to the ground.

She was stunned for a long while. "Are you sure he saw it right? Could the young woman be Gwendolyn?"

Gunnar shook his head firmly. "It's impossible. Apparently, Ms. Harris has been living with her fiancé recently at the Jenson residence."

The news came as too much of a shock for Eloise to digest.

Treyton's staying with another woman? They're sleeping, eating, and even taking the same car out of the area? She's a celebrity?

"Which b*tch is it? How dare she seduce my Trey?"

2/4

Crash!

Livid, Eloise swept everything on the dresser to the ground.

Seemingly having anticipated her outburst, Gunnar had taken a step back and managed to avoid getting hit by a perfume bottle.

"I need to know what this b*tch looks like. I'm going to smash her face in!"

Molten anger rolled through her, and she desperately wished that she could head up Mount Tranquil to catch the woman red-handed.

However, Gunnar stopped her in time. "Ms. Ferguson, we don't have any concrete evidence for this. If you rashly kick up a fuss, I'm afraid Mr. Treyton will have a worse impression of you."

"Then what should I do? Am I supposed to just watch while that woman flirts with him? Even if he doesn't think of me as his fiancée, he should be thinking about the Ferguson family! I love him so much, so how could he do this to me?"

Eloise was close to a mental breakdown.

All she wanted to do at that moment was to capture the woman who was seducing Treyton and boil her alive.

She had been discreetly getting rid of the women around Treyton all along, so she could not wrap her head around where the newcomer came from.

This rage of mine will never be appeased unless she's dead!

訂

Well aware of Eloise's short temper, Gunnar softly suggested, "Ms. Ferguson, tomorrow morning, you should..."

After listening to his suggestion, Eloise slowly calmed down, but the vicious look in her eyes remained.

Gwendolyn was bored in the Jenson residence as Cedrick had gone to the border.

Hence, she returned to the Harris residence early the following day for free meals at Treyton's villa.

It had been years since she had the chance to try out Jennifer's cooking, and she was looking forward to it.

"Treyton, when did you come back? Why didn't you tell me about this? Jennifer hasn't been troubling you, has she?"

Though Gwendolyn's words were directed at Treyton, her eyes were on Jennifer, who was working away in the kitchen.

Treyton was gazing at Jennifer as well. "No, Ms. Weller has been considerate, and she has never troubled me. She's a good chef too."

Gwendolyn smirked and asked, "Treyton, shouldn't you be thanking me for this? I brought a pretty chef to you to satisfy your craving for good food."

Treyton smiled, but his eyes were still fixed on Jennifer's silhouette.

When Jennifer brought the last breakfast dish to the table, she noticed the siblings staring at her with bright eyes.

They looked like kindergarten children waiting for their breakfast, causing her to chuckle in amusement.

She then passed the most scrumptious dish-scrambled eggs and ham—to Gwendolyn and said, “I knew you were coming for free breakfast, so I prepared this for you. Try it out and let me know how it tastes.”

Gwendolyn beamed. “I knew you loved me most! Muah!”

Jennifer merrily returned her a flying kiss.

Treyton instinctively turned to look at his sister’s plate before turning back to look at his. He was jealous.

How could she be so biased toward Gwendolyn? We’re both Harrises, but why am I not getting any meat for breakfast?

Chapter 264 No Matter What It Takes

However, he couldn’t snatch his sister’s breakfast, so he could only sulk in silence.

He wasn’t able to get a word in as the two girls chatted happily as if they couldn’t see him.

It made him feel frustrated about the meal.

Meanwhile, Jennifer and Gwendolyn had a pleasant meal.

After breakfast, Treyton went to work.

As Gwendolyn was here and they were heading in the same way, it was the first time he didn’t accompany Jennifer down the mountain.

Treyton glanced at Elisha, who was in the passenger seat, and asked, "Don't you feel something is off today?"

"Something is off?"

Elisha was perplexed and glanced back at Treyton. "No, everything seemed normal to me."

Treyton didn't say anything else. He opened his computer to check on his work for the day.

Eloise's car was parked a hundred meters away. She watched Treyton's car leave Mount Tranquil from the

corner.

Gunnar said, "It seems like Mr. Harris didn't send the girl down the mountain today. She should still be in the villa."

Eloise gritted her teeth. "That's great. I have to take away that wretched woman today!"

She had no trouble entering Mount Tranquil as Treyton's fiancée.

In Treyton's villa, Gwendolyn and Jennifer were chatting as they washed the dishes.

Knock! Knock!

Suddenly, someone knocked on the door.

Gwendolyn was puzzled and went to open the door. "Treyton, don't you have the keys? Are you too lazy to open the door? Did you forget the documents on the table? I see them!"

She opened the door and saw Eloise's enraged expression. "Ms. Ferguson?"

Eloise was surprised to see her. "Gwendolyn, why is it you? Besides you, are there any other women here?" Gwendolyn smiled coldly. "Did you come here early in the morning to question me?"

Eloise couldn't be bothered to argue with her. She pushed past Gwendolyn and ran into the living room.

Jennifer heard the commotion. She emerged from the kitchen after finishing the dishes and locked eyes with Eloise.

The latter scrutinized her with resentment. She charged over toward Jennifer and raised her hand to slap the latter across the face.

"B*tch! How dare you seduce Trey!"

Jennifer grew up in an orphanage and had a tough childhood.

Therefore, upon predicting that Eloise was going to attack her, she instinctively defended herself and grabbed Eloise's wrist.

Eloise tried to struggle but to no avail.

She was a delicate lady from a wealthy family, so she was much weaker compared to Jennifer.

She screeched, "How dare you fight back! I won't be satisfied until I tear your face apart today! Gunnar, come in! Beat her up!"

Gunnar brought in two bodyguards from the Ferguson family and approached Jennifer menacingly.

Gwendolyn immediately stood in front of Jennifer. "Eloise, look around. This is the Harris residence. What are you doing?"

Eloise glanced at her, seething with anger. "Gwendolyn, I'm your future sister-in-law! Why aren't you helping me? Instead, you're siding with this wretched woman?"

"Stop calling her nasty words such as a wretched woman. Where's your etiquette as a woman brought up in the Ferguson family?"

Gwendolyn narrowed her eyes and continued, "Moreover, Jennifer is my guest. I'm the one who requested for her to stay here temporarily. Jennifer and Treyton have an innocent relationship. Stop fighting with every single woman you see!"

"Innocent?"

Eloise was no longer thinking rationally.

"She lives with Trey and even sleeps with him! My people have seen them together so many times! How could you say they have an innocent relationship?"

Eloise gritted her teeth and glared at Gwendolyn.

"I have already said it before. We can get along peacefully if you don't hinder my relationship with Trey.. However, not only do you not keep yourself in check, you even tried to get a wretched woman to seduce Trey! I'm going to teach you both a lesson today!"

She looked toward Gunnar. "Beat them up mercilessly! Then, tie them up and bring them back!"

Gunnar didn't dare to make a move. "Ms. Ferguson, she's part of the Harris family!"

Everyone knew that Marcus and Treyton were very fond of Gwendolyn.

She was the precious darling of the Harris family that no one dared to lay a hand on!

Eloise ignored him completely and stated, "Do as I say! If something happens, I'll take the blame! If you don't dare to do it, I'm firing you immediately!"

Gunnar had no choice but to signal to the two bodyguards.

The two bodyguards took out the stun batons they had prepared earlier and approached Jennifer and

Gwendolyn.

Gwendolyn saw their weapons and immediately shielded Jennifer behind her.

When she looked at Eloise, her gaze was icy cold.

"If you dare to even lay a hand on me, I promise you and your lackeys won't be able to leave the Harris residence standing. Do you dare to try it?"

Upon hearing this, the bodyguards froze, not daring to move an inch.

Eloise sneered disdainfully. "I'm Trey's fiancée. He is keeping a mistress in his villa. Even if Mr. Marcus is here, he won't be able to stop me. As for you, you would be accidentally injured by my bodyguards.

I'll personally apologize to Mr. Marcus. You might have extensive training in jiu-jitsu, but you would face some difficulties fighting barehanded against my bodyguards with their stun batons, right?"

She chuckled loudly.

The bodyguards immediately turned their stun batons to the strongest setting and swung them toward Jennifer and Gwendolyn.

Jennifer immediately pushed Gwendolyn away so that the stun batons hit her instead.

“Jennifer!” Gwendolyn was caught off guard as she staggered back a few steps before regaining her balance.

Just as the stun batons were about to hit Jennifer, the entrance suddenly opened loudly.

The next second, a dagger pierced through the bodyguards’ hands. Blood immediately gushed out.

The stun batons fell to the ground, and the bodyguards’ mournful screams could be heard in the living room.

“Ms. Ferguson, do you think too highly of yourself for you to think that you can cause trouble in my place?”

A deep voice tinged with anger rang out from the garden.

Eloise held her breath in fear upon hearing this familiar voice.

Why did Treyton come back? I saw him leave Mount Tranquil with my own eyes!

Instantly, everyone turned toward the entrance.

Treyton walked into the living room with a stern expression.

If he hadn’t left in such a hurry and forgotten the documents on his desk, he wouldn’t have seen Eloise’s disgusting behavior in his villa.

“Trey, our engagement was arranged by our families a long time ago. Even if you have been unwilling to marry me for years and tried to break off the engagement twice, you know what will happen in the end! I am your fiancée, even if you don’t want to admit it!”

Treyton didn’t even spare her a glance. He walked past her to check on Jennifer and Gwendolyn.

“Are you hurt?”

The two shook their heads.

Eloise’s eyes reddened from his apparent lack of concern for her.

“You quarreled with me and tried to break off the engagement because of Gwendolyn the last time we were in Fairlake. Since she’s your sister, I tolerated it. However, you’re secretly living with a woman this time! How could you do this? Have you thought about our families?”

Upon hearing this, Gwendolyn frowned.

How could she be so unreasonable? I’ve already told her Jennifer had nothing to do with Treyton.

She could not believe how delusional and paranoid Eloise was.

Just as Gwendolyn was about to explain, Treyton said coldly, “You are the one who embarrassed our families. I only have contempt for you now that you schemed to get engaged to me. However, there is one thing you guessed right. I like Jennifer, and I want to marry her. So, your engagement with me will only be a joke. This time, I will spare no cost to cancel this marriage!”

Eloise was stunned after he finished speaking. Jennifer and Gwendolyn also stared at him in disbelief.

Chapter 265 Cedrick Is Critically Ill

Startled, Eloise stumbled backward and was about to fall when Gunnar caught her.

With tears welling up in her eyes and frustration surging through her heart, she grumbled, “What does that b*tch have that I don’t? In terms of family background, appearance, and education, how can she compare to me? I am the perfect match for you!”

“Eloise, even if every woman in this world were to disappear, I still wouldn’t marry you!” Treyton’s gaze turned glacial as he looked at her in disgust. He then added, “Did you hear me? Now take your people and leave! Don’t dirty up my villa!”

Eloise’s face was wet with tears as she cast a resentful glare at Jennifer, who was standing beside Gwendolyn.

Gritting her teeth, she hissed, “Treyton, I’ll make sure you regret calling off our engagement for this d*mned woman!”

After saying her piece, she turned and left with her men in tow.

Gwendolyn approached her brother, and in a tone thick with disbelief, she asked, “Treyton, were you being serious just now? Do you really have feelings for Jennifer?”

Caught off guard by the sudden news, she paused to collect her thoughts. “Does that mean I’ve just dug my own grave? Is my best friend going to become my sister-in-law? What kind of absurd turn of events is this? Treyton, I won’t let you muddle up everything!”

Instead of replying to her question, Treyton said, “Kiddo, it’s getting late. You should head to work first. I need to have a word with Ms. Weller.”

“Fine,” was Gwendolyn’s reply before she glanced at Jennifer and saw that the woman had a bewildered and unsure expression on her face.

With only Treyton and Jennifer left in the living room, the former closed the door and strode over to the sofa. His gaze was intense and deep when he uttered, “Ms. Weller, please have a seat.”

“Oh, okay,” Jennifer obliged and sat stiffly on the small sofa next to him, keeping a considerable distance between them.

Perhaps sensing the awkward atmosphere, Treyton opened a drawer and took out a cigar before lighting it and taking a deep puff.

Amidst the swirling smoke, his deep and magnetic voice became even more alluring as he said, “Please don’t take what happened earlier to heart, Ms. Weller. I simply wanted to discuss a potential collaboration with you.”

“What kind of collaboration are you talking about?” Jennifer asked, feeling a bit confused.

“I’m sure you can tell that I don’t have any feelings for Eloise, so I’m proposing that you pretend to be my lover to help me break off the engagement with the Ferguson family. In exchange, I shall assist you in securing a stable footing in the entertainment industry, help you become a leading actress, and even ensure the downfall of Walter. In fact, if you wish to personally deal with that sc*mbag, I can bring him before you,” Treyton explained, outlining his proposal.

Jennifer fell silent.

Treyton continued, “I’m aware that Kiddo must have promised you a lot of benefits as well, but I know you’re not the kind of person who likes to owe others. Kiddo has always been helpful to you, and you must feel indebted to her. Besides, Kiddo is still building her career in the entertainment industry,

whereas I’m already at the top. If we cooperate, it will be a mutually beneficial arrangement where we owe nothing to each other.”

After listening to his explanation, Jennifer heaved a sigh of relief and felt as if a weight had been lifted off her shoulders.

Bemused, Treyton asked, “Is there something wrong?”

Jennifer smiled and shook her head. "It's nothing. I'm just relieved that Mr. Harris doesn't actually have feelings for me and only wants to cooperate. Your words just put my mind at ease."

I would have felt guilty for interfering in someone else's relationship and considered myself a sinner if that wasn't the

case.

With a deadpan expression, Treyton inquired, "So, does that mean you'll do it?"

Jennifer nodded, her eyes flashing with determination as she said, "Yes. It is my pleasure to be working together with you, Mr. Harris."

"Great. I'll get Elisha to arrange for a lawyer to draft the agreement as soon as possible. All you need to do is cooperate with me when the time comes."

"All right, Mr. Harris."

Sitting in the car, Eloise was seething in anger as she descended the mountain. The more she thought about it, the angrier she became, to the point where her heart felt like it was about to explode.

She muttered, "B*tches! All of them are b*tches!"

Gunnar tried to console her. "Please calm down, Ms. Ferguson. Let's go back and discuss this matter further. Your marriage with Mr. Harris is a business alliance, so even if he wants to break off the engagement, he would have to go through Marcus first. It won't be that easy to dissolve the marriage."

Eloise clenched her fists tightly, feeling as if she was on the brink of insanity. "As long as I'm alive, he will never be able to break off this engagement! It's just that what happened today is simply too infuriating! I must find a way to teach him a lesson! He needs to know that I, Eloise Ferguson, am not someone to be bullied easily!"

As she gazed at Mount Tranquil receding in the distance, a hint of malevolence glimmered in her eyes.

She growled, “Jennifer must die! As for Gwendolyn, she’s not that innocent either, so I’ll find an opportunity to deal with the two of them together! Since Treyton said that he wouldn’t be marrying me even if all the women in the world were to disappear, I’ll just kill all the women around him! Let’s see who he can marry, then. I’ll make sure he’s alone for the rest of his life!”

Frightened by the viciousness flashing in Eloise’s eyes, Gunnar kept his mouth shut.

One day later, in the mountains near the border of Chanaea, a group of people could be seen wearing ghillie suits with their faces painted with camouflage paint. Among them was Cedrick, whose handsome face was hidden under the same getup.

He had received word that two groups of people would be conducting an underground dealing at Lake Pavilion, which was five hundred meters away, that day. As such, they had been lying in wait, monitoring

the area patiently for the past twelve hours.

After waiting for a while longer, Nico, who had green camouflage paint on his face as well, arrived stealthily, crouching low to the ground. “Boss, the targets have appeared. They will reach Lake Pavilion

within ten minutes at the latest.”

Cedrick’s expression turned solemn as he said, “Good. Notify all surveillance team members to take their positions. Inform the snipers to get into position as well. If the transaction takes place or if any special circumstances arise, they are allowed to fire warning shots, but no one is to be harmed. We need to capture them alive for interrogation.”

“Understood.”

Just when Cedrick tried to change his position, his legs gave out when he stood up, causing him to stumble and fall toward Nico.

“Boss?”

All his subordinates instinctively reached out to support him.

Hearing the commotion, Nico turned around and held onto Cedrick’s arm. “Boss, what’s wrong with you? You don’t seem too good. Are you feeling all right?”

Cedrick took a deep breath. “I’m fine. I’ve been crouching for too long, so I’m feeling a bit lightheaded, that’s all.”

Nico muttered, “How is that possible?”

All of us here are specially trained. Under normal circumstances, we wouldn’t experience such issues even after a day and night of crouching.

With that thought in mind, Nico checked Cedrick’s pulse and noticed that although the man’s pulse seemed normal, his body temperature was abnormally low.

“Boss, could it be that the virus is spreading again? Should we go back to the laboratory and have Professor Yancey run some tests?” he suggested.

Cedrick pursed his dry lips and replied, “No need. We have more pressing matters at hand. Let’s focus on the mission first and deal with other issues once we return.”

“Understood.”

Ten minutes later, two groups of people made their way to Lake Pavilion leisurely. They carried black boxes for the transaction, and the area around them was crowded with security personnel wearing sunglasses.

After using a binocular to assess the situation, Cedrick led his team to approach the area, gradually narrowing the encirclement.

Bang!

A gunshot rang out, startling the birds in the surrounding forest.

One of the guards stationed around the pavilion was hit by the bullet and fell to the ground, causing the people in the pavilion who were about to engage in the transaction to go on high alert.

Stunned, Nico exclaimed, "Did someone fire a preemptive shot?"

Cedrick narrowed his eyes and trained his cold gaze on the left side of the forest. "The sound came from the nine o'clock direction, five hundred meters away. Arrange a team to capture them immediately. I want them alive."

Now that the crisp sound of the gunshot had exposed their position, they had no choice but to proceed despite the risks since they were already close to Lake Pavilion.

Both sides swiftly opened fire.

The situation descended into chaos as sparks flew.

The deafening sound of gunshots echoed through the air, assaulting the ears of everyone present.

Just then, Cedrick experienced a momentary ringing in his ears, accompanied by a piercing headache. His 'body went weak, and he found himself unable to even squeeze the trigger on his weapon.

His vision grew increasingly blurry, and he struggled to regulate his breathing amidst the wave of dizziness.

In the end, he succumbed to the darkness.

“Boss!” Nico almost lost his sanity when he saw Cedrick slump to the ground beside him.

Chapter 266 Countdown To Death

“Boss, you’re awake!”

Upon getting a grip of himself, Nico threw himself forward to check on Cedrick’s condition. Fortunately, the latter was unharmed and wasn’t struck by any bullets.

That can only mean the virus inside him is acting up!

Nico placed his trembling hand on Cedrick’s neck to check his pulse.

Upon feeling its steady rhythm, he heaved a sigh of relief.

Thank God he’s still alive. He just lost consciousness.

After lifting Cedrick by the arm and loading him on his back, Nico calmly gave out instructions.

“Neville, Swain, retreat with me. As for the rest of you, provide cover and retreat in ten minutes. We’ll meet back in Salinsburgh two days later.”

“Got it.”

Once the orders were issued, Nico carried the unconscious Cedrick on his back and fled through the forest.

Following closely behind them, Neville and Swain stayed vigilant for any potential attacks by the enemy.

They subsequently boarded a waiting helicopter and returned to Salinsburgh after leaving the border as fast as they could.

However, Cedrick remained unconscious during the flight. His face grew increasingly pale, whereas his body felt cold to the touch.

When Nico put his hand on Cedrick's neck again, he noticed that the latter's pulse was growing weak while his breath began to shallow.

"Hurry up! Fly this bird as fast as you can!" Nico roared as his eyes turned bloodshot.

By then, his voice had begun to choke. "Boss, you can't die yet! You have to hang in there. We'll be at the lab soon. Prof. Mallory will definitely save you!"

As Neville and Swain were still young, their tears fell like raindrops against their will.

Kneeling by Cedrick's side, both of them cried while rubbing his hands in an attempt to provide his body some heat.

It wasn't until three hours had passed that they arrived at the lab in the middle of the night.

Finally, Cedrick's condition began to stabilize after Joshua injected a stronger dosage of the suppressant.

As his eyelashes began to twitch, Cedrick woke up in a groggy state.

He scanned his surroundings once his vision gradually returned to him.

It was then that he noticed Nico's reddened eyes, a sign that he had cried earlier.

Joshua was studying his lab report with an equally grim look; the tear streaks beneath his eyes were easily

noticeable.

“What happened?”

Cedrick sat himself up.

Silence was the only response he received from the two as a sense of despair filled the room.

“Joshua, I can feel the condition my body is in. There’s no need to hide the truth from me. I’m ready to accept the news no matter how terrible it is.”

Joshua tried to hold back his emotions as he spoke. “I’m sorry, Cedrick. I’ve failed you by not coming up with a cure for your virus after such a long time.”

Holding the lab report with his trembling hands, he continued, “Your body has begun to resist the ‘suppressant due to its overuse. You started off with an injection every seven days before requiring one every five, and then one every three now. Once your body has gotten used to it, there’s no way we can suppress the virus anymore. Moreover, the virus has begun to spread through your body. The current fainting spell and the deterioration of your fitness levels you mentioned to Nico are signs of your body degenerating.”

Brows furrowed and lips pale, Cedrick asked, “How bad will the degeneration be?”

“Under the worst–case scenario, you’ll be paralyzed, and this is the only symptom we can identify so far. I have no idea whether your body will show other symptoms once the suppressant loses its effect against the virus.”

Joshua’s eyes brimmed with sadness as he continued, “Whatever it is, it doesn’t look good.”

The moment he finished, a long silence descended upon the room, weighing down upon the already solemn atmosphere.

Upon letting out a chuckle, Cedrick asked softly, "In that case, how long more do I have?"

Joshua sighed as she raised his palm with a reluctant look in his eyes.

"Less than five months? And that's assuming you take good care of your body."

The news caused Nico to clench his fists till his veins bulged up.

With his head hung low, quiet tears began to fall onto the ground.

"All right. I understand."

Cedrick was stunned for a long while before he finally nodded his head, seemingly an acknowledgment of the death sentence the doctor had passed him.

"Joshua, please leave us. I have something to discuss with Nico."

Desperately holding back his tears, Joshua nodded before walking out and closing the door behind him.

As Cedrick shifted his attention to the shocked Nico, he let out a gentle laugh. "Hey man, stop being so sad. I'm not dead yet. Now, come over here."

Nico wiped away his tears with his arm as he walked awkwardly to Cedrick's bedside.

"I'm not crying! I'm just ecstatic to see you finally suffer after being such a harsh leader toward me." The words naturally amused Cedrick. "Good. I'm glad that you don't have a conscience." The depressed Nico simply looked away and ignored the comment.

Cedrick continued, "Ever since Charles was removed from his post, the position of the director of the Central Intelligence Agency has been left vacant. I'll write you a recommendation letter and have Neville, Swain, and the others report to you. With your capabilities, I'm sure you'll take over the position within a month."

Nico stared at Cedrick in disbelief, the hurt in his eyes unmistakable. "Boss, are you getting rid of me?" "You have a lot of potential. After my death, that's the best place for all of you to move on."

However, Neville shook his head vehemently. "But that isn't what I want! There's no way I'm leaving your "side unless you kill me. Besides, Swain and Neville would never agree to go with me."

Cedrick proceeded to analyze the pros and cons for him. "Craig Newton is now the second-in-command of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He has always been ruthless and shows no mercy to his enemies. If he learns of my sickness and seizes upon the opportunity to take my place, he will come after all of you just for being my followers."

"I know."

With his eyes brimming with conviction, Nico stood firm. "If he wants to kill me, then let him come. I'm not leaving you no matter what!"

"This is an order!"

Cedrick wore a stern expression in a rare effort to calmly explain, "No good will come out of following a heartless leader like me. Just look at the dire circumstances I have fallen-"

Before he could finish, Nico dropped to his knees with a loud thud.

"Boss, are you angry with me? I was just teasing you a moment ago. Learning of your condition feels worse than death itself. To me, you're not just a superior but a comrade and even family!"

Nico crawled toward Cedrick's bed on his knees and grabbed its sides tightly. His eyes were filled with a sense of helpless abandonment.

“My life belongs to you, and you’re the only person I’ll follow. You can’t force me to leave! This is the only order that I’m not going to obey. Boss, please don’t do this...”

Nico held back his tears as hard as he could while giving Cedrick an unwavering look.

As for Cedrick, he returned the former’s gaze with an exhausted and pale expression.

He’s such a loyal comrade.

As their usual banter never included such heartfelt words, Cedrick couldn’t help but be moved by them.

Thus, he got a grip on himself and gently struck Nico on the head.

“You fool, I can’t believe that you’re more stubborn than I am! You just won’t relent despite how hard I’m trying to persuade you.”

Nico quickly got up to his feet and poured a glass of warm water for Cedrick.

“I refuse to leave no matter what. There’s no room for discussion at all!”

Feeling exasperated, Nico decided to change topics by reminding Cedrick, “Boss, you had better think of how you’re going to tell Ms. Gwendolyn. Half a year ago, she was devastated to learn of your death. This time...”

Chapter 267 Do You Still Love Me

Nico paused and didn’t continue as he noticed the sudden furrow of Cedrick’s brow and the grim look in his eyes.

“This matter about the virus has to be kept a secret. You’re not allowed to tell her at all!”

“Understood.”

Nico was still worried nonetheless. “But Boss, even if you keep it from her now, she’ll still be gutted to learn of your death five months later!”

“I know. Let me figure it out.”

When Cedrick lowered his eyes in dejection, the twitch in his eyelashes made it seem as if he was hiding something.

Nico immediately recognized the sad dilemma his boss was going through.

As it was already late, Nico took his leave and left Cedrick in the lab to rest.

Deep into the quiet night, the palm leaves outside rustled with the wind, heralding the arrival of a drizzle.

Tilting his head to the side, Cedrick looked through the window at the raindrops outside thoughtfully. The proud expression he always wore was replaced by a complicated one.

It was then that he heard a message notification on his phone.

When he unlocked it to check, he realized it was from Gwendolyn.

Gwendolyn: Ceddy, how’s your sleep at the border?

Gwendolyn: I heard the ultra-violet rays there are particularly strong. Would you be coming back with a bronze- tanned complexion? When I see you, can I call you Bronzy then? Haha.

The message elicited a smile from Cedrick.

Right before his eyes, he could see the image of Gwendolyn talking to him. The smile on her face made her look particularly adorable.

Suddenly, he felt the urge to hug her and never let go for the rest of his life.

Thereafter, another message from Gwendolyn arrived: Are you asleep? Is it inconvenient for you to reply over there?

Gwendolyn: Wait, is there even a signal? In that case, I won't bother you anymore. Good night!

After that message, Gwendolyn's chat window stopped popping up.

Cedrick subsequently ran his fingers across the screen to stroke the words that she had sent. A single teardrop fell despite his efforts to hold it back and disappeared into his sideburn. All of a sudden, an intense pain engulfed his heart, causing his limbs to tremble uncontrollably.

1. e. Cedrick curled up in bed. His nose was covered in sweat while the veins on his hand bulged

up as he clutched his heart.

Every breath he took was so painful that his body would quiver.

Despite his already terrible condition, the pain grew increasingly intense.

Finally, he was hurting so badly that he ended up groaning. As he tried to reach the call bell with his shaking hand, he fell off the bed due to being too weak.

The commotion alerted Joshua who was just next door.

Upon hurrying over, he was shocked the moment he opened the door.

“Cedrick! Oh my God! I told you not to let your emotions get the better of you. Stop being too sad or excited. Otherwise, the chest pain you’re suffering from will kill you!”

“While ranting, Joshua swiftly retrieved a tablet and stuffed it into Cedrick’s mouth.

As the drug needed time to take effect, Joshua had no choice but to help Cedrick back up in bed and tuck him in.

After staying by his side for a few hours, Joshua heaved a sigh of relief when Cedrick fell asleep from exhaustion.

That night was also a sleepless one for Gwendolyn.

Staring at the ceiling light, she suddenly recalled how Cedrick was almost hit in the heart by a bullet and lost a lot of blood on his last mission.

This time, he had gone to the border that was rumored to be extremely perilous and littered with formidable enemies.

Yet, when Cedrick didn’t reply to her messages, she had no idea if he was hurt or if his mission was completed.

Amidst the uncertainty, she gradually drifted off to sleep.

Due to not sleeping well the night before, Gwendolyn went to the office with dark circles around her eyes.

Little did she expect the man she was pining for to return that very evening.

Carrying the train of her dress, she ran upstairs and pushed open the bedroom door.

Cedrick was sitting on the bed, engrossed in a book.

As he flipped its pages with his long fingers, the aura he exuded was unparalleled in its debonair.

Even though he was just leaning against the headboard, his dashing looks would make the knees of any

woman go

weak.

Upon hearing the door, Cedrick raised his gaze and gave Gwendolyn a gentle look. He then called out in a deep voice, "Gwenny."

The smiling Gwendolyn quickly climbed into bed and straddled herself on his lap. Holding his cheeks close. with both her hands, she leaned in to observe his face up

"I can't believe you didn't get a tan from your trip to the border, as your current complexion looks so irresistible that I feel like giving it a bite!"

After pecking twice on his lips, Gwendolyn flashed a cheeky smile as if she was a child who had just been given a lollipop.

"Ceddy, why didn't you tell me that you're coming back ahead of time? If I hadn't spotted Nico at the door, I would still be clueless about your return. Were you planning to give me a surprise?"

Cedrick responded with a faint smile, to hide the weakness in his eyes.

“That’s right. I wanted to surprise you.”

Despite his best efforts, Gwendolyn still detected the gloominess in him from the depth of his tone.

“Ceddy, did the mission at the border not go according to plan? Why do you seem upset?”

Lips pursed, Cedrick extended his arm toward her.

Gwendolyn responded by sitting on his left and leaning her head against his shoulder. She then threaded her cold hands deep into his robe and began caressing his waist.

Even though he quivered from her icy touch, he didn’t move away at all. Instead, he wore an affectionate smile as he relished in the sensation her wandering hands brought him.

“There’s a member of Jenson Group’s senior management who has spent his entire life in my service. He and his wife are extremely loving...”

With a nonchalant expression, he began to speak in his magnetic voice.

Noticing that Cedrick seemed to have a lot to say that evening, Gwendolyn wrapped her arms around his waist and listened to him intently.

“Recently, he was diagnosed with late-stage cancer and was only given months to live. He didn’t dare tell his family, especially his wife. So, he wanted me to come up with an idea for him, but death is a complex issue to navigate.”

Gwendolyn, who was infected by the grim mood, lamented, “Considering how close he is to his wife, she’ll be devastated by the news. When it comes to matters of death, the living are the ones who suffer the

most.”

Her words caused Cedrick to freeze as he desperately tried to hide the sorrow that was welling up within him.

“That’s right. The living are the ones who will no doubt be hurt the most.”

Half a year ago, Gwendolyn was mired in anguish over my death. Nothing is worse than losing something you used to have. If I put her through it one more time, I’m sure she’ll be stricken with grief, won’t she?

At that moment, Gwendolyn was oblivious to Cedrick’s dejected mood as she was thinking about what happened to him half a year ago.

Just the thought alone was enough to fill her with desolation and cause her eyes to redden.

Her slender arms subsequently tightened around his waist.

“Luckily, I was given a clean bill of health when I did a medical check-up yesterday. Therefore, Ceddy, you have to take good care of yourself. Don’t get hurt on your missions, as we still have a long future ahead of

us.”

As Cedrick swallowed the lump in his throat, his hands balled into fists underneath the blanket.

She still has a long future ahead of her, but my days are now numbered.

After parting his pale lips a few times, he finally mustered the courage to pop the question he never dared ask.

“Gwen, do you still love me?”

He lowered his head and locked gazes with Gwendolyn.

There was a time when he was afraid to ask that question.

He was worried that her answer would turn his heart icy cold and make him feel as if all his sacrifices were in vain.

But this time, he hoped that she would tell him that she didn't love him anymore.

Chapter 268 Full Of Himself

The sky outside the window had turned pitch black.

A desk lamp inside the bedroom remained lit, casting a dim yellow light.

The back of Cedrick's head faced the lamp, causing his face to be unclear and hidden in the shadows.

Nonetheless, Gwendolyn could sense his scorching gaze. She sat upright and slipped out of his arm. Cupping his cheeks with her hands, she uttered with utter seriousness, “Ceddy, I once thought I could let go of my love for you without hesitation, but ever since I almost lost you, I've fully understood

my feelings. I love you deeply the same way you love me. No matter how many times you ask this question in the future, my answer will stay the same. I love you.”

They locked gazes, and tears welled up in their eyes at the same time.

Cedrick suppressed his urge to cry and held her in his embrace so tightly that his arms trembled. My Gwen said she loves me deeply too.

Although he would've preferred her to say she didn't love him this time, hearing her speak so earnestly filled him with overwhelming emotion. I'm contented for life, having listened to this.

Sensing his tension, she gently patted his back to comfort him.

The hug lasted a long time, to the extent that Gwendolyn thought Cedrick had fallen asleep before he finally let go of her.

"It's getting late. Let's rest early."

"Huh?" Gwendolyn was a little taken aback. He's going to sleep at half-past nine? Did he come back just to get a hug?

Amidst her bafflement, Cedrick had already slipped under the covers.

For some reason, she found his behavior to be strange that night.

Gwendolyn followed suit, lying in the crook of his arm. She asked in a teasing tone, "Ceddy, we haven't seen each other for several days. Now that you're finally back tonight, shouldn't we have a pre-sleep massage session?"

He shut his eyes, wearing a cold and indifferent expression that clearly indicated he was abstaining that night. He also didn't respond to her question.

Gwendolyn felt frustrated. He's acting so cold toward me upon returning after we've not seen each other for so many days? He doesn't even have the desire to be intimate with me. Have I lost my charm?

As if to prove her doubts wrong, Gwendolyn slid her hand under the covers into his robe, gently teasing his abs and chest muscles.

Cedrick's breath began to quicken under her teasing. He frowned, caught her hands, and coaxed her, "Be good and stop fooling around. Let's sleep,"

Gwendolyn pouted, feeling a little angry.

She puffed out her cheeks, causing her to resemble a small pufferfish.

"Ceddy, you haven't even kissed me since you came back, and you're going to sleep so early. Are you planning to become a monk and renounce all earthly desires?" She confronted him blatantly.

Gwendolyn complained softly while overtly enticing him with her seductive looks.

Cedrick closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

As if he had braced himself to make a huge decision, his dark gaze turned impassive when he opened his eyes. "Gwendolyn, let's call off our engagement."

"Mm?" It took her a long while to understand his meaning. "What did you say?"

Moreover, he addressed her as Gwendolyn, not Gwenny.

His magnetic voice was even laced with a hint of estrangement.

*She immediately furrowed her brows and abruptly sat up on the bed, staring at him frostily. Then,

seemingly uncertain of what she heard, Gwendolyn uttered, "Say that again."

Cedrick didn't get up. Instead, he shrunk his shoulders under the covers, and his long eyelashes fluttered slightly, "I said, let's break up."

He spoke in a nonchalant voice, but Gwendolyn felt heart-wrenching pain spreading throughout her body.

“Why?” She didn’t understand why he seemed somewhat estranged upon returning this time. She also found it impossible to figure out what he was thinking.

“Perhaps I’m getting tired of this.” His voice sounded muffled as he covered his face with the blanket. His! words had an undertone of nervousness amidst the distance.

Gwendolyn was genuinely enraged. “Get up!”

She grabbed his ear, tugging him upward and pulling him out of the covers. “Cedrick, look at me and say that again!”

Cedrick’s face tightened with discomfort. His eyes darted around as he tried to avoid her gaze, but he occasionally stole glances at her.

Gwendolyn’s eyes reddened with anger, and her face was filled with wrath. “Calling off the engagement, breaking up, and getting tired of our relationship. Are you serious about all of that? Tell me!”

She practically shouted toward the end of her sentence.

Startled by her outburst, Cedrick lost his momentum. “Y–Yes...”

“Bullsh*t! Look at me when you speak!”

Gwendolyn pinched his jaw, forcing him to meet her gaze.

Exploding with rage, she bore her eyes into his. “Cedrick, I suggest you think carefully before answering, This is the last chance I’m giving you. If you lose it, I will never forgive no matter what reason you give in the future. Never!”

Her chest heaved in a fit of temper, and tears involuntarily brimmed in her eyes.

Under the dim light, her eyes shone like stars, but she stubbornly refused to let her tears fall.

An expression filled with anger and grievances, disbelief intertwined with doubt, spread across her face. Gedrick's words had apparently hurt her.

Cedrick looked into her eyes.

He couldn't bear to see her upset or crying. As a result, seeing her current mien caused his heart to flutter in confusion.

"Talk to me! Have you gone mute?"

"I..." Facing her wrath, his resolution instantly wavered. "I'm not sure. Let me reconsider. I'm tired. Let's sleep."

He broke free from her restraint and returned to the comfort of the blanket. He even turned over, *showing her his back as he slept.

Gwendolyn's fury intensified as she stared at him, feigning to be asleep. He still wants to reconsider? What is there to reconsider? Whether or not he wants to stay in a relationship with me? Are all men jerks, after all? They don't appreciate the things they assume they already have.

She was not adept at expressing her affection, and that was the first time she had told him that she loved him, yet he had already got so full of himself.

He not only didn't value the chance she gave him but also unbelievably demanded a breakup, said he was tired of their relationship and wanted to reconsider things.

That was also the first time he turned his back on her, distancing himself from her, and slept at the edge of the bed as if she carried some sort of plague.

Does he think he can take me for granted just because I love him? What does he think I am? Am I just someone he can summon and dismiss at will? Does he really think I, Gwendolyn Shalders Harris, am a pushover?

The more she thought about it, the angrier she became, her rage almost consuming her rationale.

"Cedrick, you ungrateful b*stard!" She lifted her leg and booted his firm buttocks.

Caught off guard and with little strength left in him, he fell off the bed, letting out a muffled groan.

He rolled on the carpet before struggling to sit up.

Cedrick swiftly wiped away the agonized expression on his face when he lowered his head.

Gwendolyn was stunned. She instinctively wanted to reach out and help him up, clearly not expecting she could kick him off the bed so easily.

However, she stopped herself halfway through and quietly retracted her arms.

The entire bedroom was carpeted with flannel, so even if he fell, the impact would be cushioned. Hence, Gwendolyn figured it wouldn't hurt that much.

Besides, judging by how despicable he behaved that night, she even had the urge to beat him to death. Kicking him was already considered letting him off easy.

She snorted coldly and sat cross-legged at the edge of the bed. She crossed her arms in indignation and

looked down at him from her perch. This insolent b*stard! “Get up and kneel.”

Cedrick tried to support himself with his hands on his knees, but he was too weak. He couldn’t even straighten his back or knees.

Fearing Gwendolyn would notice something was amiss, he mimicked her posture and casually sat cross-legged on the carpet, wearing a look of defiant aloofness on his countenance.

She stared at him in astonishment. “Cedrick! You’re not obedient at all!”

Chapter 269 I Will Be There

Cedrick’s gaze dropped, avoiding Gwendolyn’s eyes as he exuded a cold and distant demeanor.

Gwendolyn couldn’t comprehend what was going on with him. She was consumed by fury, fueled by the overwhelming desire to confront him and inflict physical harm to ensure he would never dare to break up with her again.

Fueled by her anger, she stepped down from the bed, her feet bare as she approached the bedside table, where a heavy wooden ruler was stored in the first drawer.

However, at that moment, she hesitated, realizing the potential consequences of her impulses.

She was worried about the harm she could inflict on Cedrick with the heavy ruler if he chose to confront her beatings directly.

On the other hand, the notion of returning empty-handed after her outburst filled Gwendolyn with a sense of foolishness.

She discreetly turned around to check on Cedrick and found him gazing directly at her.

The mere thought of coming back without anything in her hands caused her to cringe with embarrassment.

Determined to salvage the situation, she grabbed Cedrick's black belt from the coat rack, folding it in half with the buckle firmly in her hand, before sitting back on the bed.

"Do you see this? Don't push me to the point where I have to resort to violence!" she exclaimed, attempting to intimidate him.

Cedrick lifted his gaze and glanced at the belt in her hand, his face devoid of emotion.

"I had already given up on you back then, but you were the one who wanted me to give you a second chance. Now that I've given you that chance and have decided to spend the rest of my life with you, you're telling me you want to break up? Why? Give me a logical explanation for this!"

Cedrick's handsome face glowed under the dim light as he gulped.

He lowered his gaze and remained silent, exuding a cold aura.

To Gwendolyn, his silence felt like a form of silent resistance.

She wondered if he was giving her the silent treatment and bit her lip, feeling hurt.

"Fine. You need some time to think things through, right? Take all the time you need, then! Talk to me when you've figured things out."

Frustrated, she threw the belt at him, got off the bed, and stormed out of the room.

The atmosphere of the room turned somber as she forcefully closed the door behind her.

As Gwendolyn entered the next room, she decided she would sleep in separate rooms with Cedrick from that point forward.

Throughout the night, she tossed and turned, her mind buzzing with thoughts of Cedrick and his distant attitude.

Frustration mounting, she sat up and checked her phone.

Her eyes widened in disbelief when she saw that it was already past two in the morning, and Cedrick had yet to come and offer any consolation.

It became increasingly evident to her that he was seriously considering ending their relationship.

Whatever! This is ridiculous!

Gwendolyn nestled back into bed and pulled the covers over herself.

I had been a while since she had slept alone

over herself.

found it somewhat

difficult to adjust.

Neither she nor Cedrick had an easy time falling asleep that night.

When Gwendolyn woke up the next morning

Cedrick's room door remained tightly shut.

Assuming he might still be asleep, she decided to head to Angle Corporation to avoid any interaction with Cedrick.

The sky of Salinsburg was shrouded with dark clouds, reflecting the gloomy weather that had persisted for the past two days.

Gwendolyn sat uneasily at her desk, resting her chin on her hands and gazing absentmindedly at the drizzle outside the window.

Images of Cedrick's peculiar behavior from the previous night flashed through her mind, causing her to lose focus during Joanne's report.

It suddenly dawned on her that he had let out a groan when she kicked him off the bed.

Knowing Cedrick's high pain tolerance, it seemed odd that he would react that way unless he was deliberately exaggerating his misery to gain her sympathy.

Moreover, considering Cedrick's heavier weight and martial arts background, it seemed implausible that she could kick him off the bed so easily.

As she dwelled on these thoughts, a realization—struck her. Something wasn't right.

All the signs seemed to indicate that Cedrick might be genuinely injured or weakened.

That explained why she could effortlessly kick him off the bed.

She slapped the table out of frustration at those thoughts.

She had been so blinded by rage yesterday night that she had overlooked all those details.

Now that she thought about it, Cedrick had been acting way off.

Joanne jumped in fright at the sudden bang of the table. "Ms. Harris, did I say anything wrong?"

"No." Gwendolyn quickly regained her composure, realizing the disruption she had caused.

She swiftly gathered her belongings, stating, "I have some urgent matters to attend to, Please continue with

h your report upon my return. And if I don't, you can proceed with it tomorrow."

The rain intensified in Salinsburgh that day, pouring heavily onto the city streets.

Cedrick sat in his office at Jenson Group, his eyes dull and lifeless.

As he observed the raindrops trickling down the windowpane, his thoughts drifted back to a conversation he had with Charles in Fairlake.

"The virus in your body will have long-lasting effects. Eventually, you will be disabled. She may pity you at first, but what about in the long run? It has been decided that your disabled body isn't worthy of her from the moment you were poisoned. Neither you nor I can have her!"

Cedrick's fists clenched tightly, his face growing pale. Exhaustion washed over him as his energy slowly seeped away.

Perhaps it was time for him to make a decision.

“He believed it would be better to endure temporary pain rather than prolong the excruciating experience.

He thought that if Gwendolyn grew tired of him and started to hate him, she could eventually move on from the sadness and agony they were currently experiencing and find a better life.

Meanwhile, Evelyn, who was sitting on a nearby sofa, was pouring herself a cup of tea.

As the ambassador of Rossi Project, she had come to discuss the terms of her compensation as outlined in her contract with Cedrick.

However, Cedrick had been mentally absent ever since she entered his office. He had been silently gazing at the rain outside his floor-to-ceiling window for the past half-hour.

“Mr. Jenson, you seem to be out of sorts today. It doesn’t appear to be work-related. Did you and Ms. Harris have a recent disagreement?”

Cedrick’s face twisted in displeasure. “Mind your words. Who do you think you are to ask me that?”

Evelyn smiled and replied tactfully, “Okay, I won’t ask. But if you ever need my help, I will give it my all!”

Cedrick remained unmoved by her affectionate tone. In fact, he despised it. “What do you want? Spit it out and leave.”

Evelyn gracefully approached Cedrick as she stood up. Just as she was about to speak, Nico knocked on the door. “Mr. Jenson, Ms. Gwendolyn is here.”

Why is she here?

In a moment of panic, Cedrick grabbed Evelyn’s hand with his leather-gloved hand.

Evelyn leaned down to his eye level, positioning her ear close to his lips to hear his whispered instructions.

That was the scene Gwendolyn walked in on when she entered the room.

The sight of them intimately biting each other's ears sent a sharp pang through her heart.

"Cedrick?"

Evelyn feigned surprise when she heard Gwendolyn's voice. She pulled away from took a step back.

edrick awkwardly and

"Ms. Harris, fancy meeting you here. What a coincidence."

The way

she was trying to cover up her actions after being exposed deepened Gwendolyn's frown. "Did I catch you at a bad time? What were you two doing?"

Evelyn stuttered and glanced at Cedrick, her face flushed with embarrassment.

Cedrick's eyes darkened as he replied nonchalantly, "We're doing exactly what you think we're doing."

He's trying to spite me.

Gwendolyn took a deep breath, reminding herself to stay calm and trying her best to suppress her anger.

“You. Get out,” she said to Evelyn coldly.

Feeling reluctant, Evelyn called out in a sweet tone. “Mr. Jenson...”

Cedrick, avoiding eye contact, pursed his lips, seemingly agreeing with Gwendolyn’s decision.

Hence, Evelyn had no choice but to leave the room.

Gwendolyn waited until Evelyn left before approaching Cedrick.

Noticing his pale complexion, she crouched down, placed her hands on his lap, and looked up at him.
“Ceddy, did you hurt yourself during your mission at the border? I’m sorry I kicked you last night. I didn’t know. But Ceddy, you’re not alone. Don’t bear all the pain alone. I will be by your side, caring for you. I’m also learning how to show you love and protect you, okay?”

Chapter 270 Cedrick Teased

“My heart goes out to you, so I’ll stay by your side. I’ll also learn how to love and protect you.”

Her soothingly lilting voice drifted into Cedrick’s ears and echoed in his mind.

The most dazzling smile bloomed before him.

His heart that ached inexplicably felt as if it were engulfed by warm light which melted all its frost.

Cedrick felt a lump in his throat as he instinctively reached for her soft face.

However, he still wore his leather gloves that had just touched Evelyn.

He discreetly withdrew his hand at the thought while his other palm, which hung on the other side of his thigh, curled into a fist subconsciously.

Charles was right.

Gwendolyn's fiery personality made her a force to behold with her enemies. They could never get close to her without being burnt.

Yet when it came to the people she loved, she was as docile as a cat, irresistibly drawing others to her.

She embodied vitality, charisma, and resilience.

He had assumed the virus within him could be suppressed well enough so that they could look forward to a life together.

Little did he expect it to become wishful thinking with how rapidly the virus spread.

He was nothing more than a broken man with half a foot in the grave. Gwendolyn deserved better than him.

I'm the one holding her back.

"Ceddy?" Gwendolyn murmured when she noticed Cedrick being lost in his thoughts.

Cedrick regained his senses and stretched out his arms slightly, resuming his aloof expression. "I'm not injured. Feel free to inspect me if you have any doubts."

"I don't believe you. You can't trick me when you look worse for wear. I need you to explain what exactly happened. What were you and Evelyn doing when I came in? Why do I sense that you were trying to pique me?"

“I think I like her quite a bit.”

Cedrick interrupted before she could finish her sentence.

“Excuse me?”

Gwendolyn was stunned. She withdrew her hands from his thighs and took several steps back, staring at him as if he were a stranger.

Cedrick directed his gaze out of the floor-to-ceiling window and

and uttered unfeelingly, “She’s gorgeous

with a gentle personality that pulls on one’s heartstrings. No man can reject the advances of such a lady.

So, what do you think I was doing with her just now?”

Gwendolyn’s expression fell as she continued backing away from him.

“Are you disgusted with me?”

Cedrick scoffed in disdain. “You’re prideful, dominant, and cruel compared to her. Perhaps a change of taste is due after pursuing you for so many years. I’m tired.”

Gwendolyn’s shapely eyes narrowed on his chiseled profile. “You’ve changed, Cedrick.”

“Men always seek excitement and the thrill of a chase. I did not change, Gwendolyn. You’ve merely seen my true colors. Now you know I’m no good, scram.”

His ruthless words hung in the air for several minutes, undisturbed by the silence.

‘Gwendolyn remained rooted to the spot.

Cedrick continued gazing out the window. His inky eyes were devoid of any hint of sentiment and filled only with cold detachedness.

Despite that, an unexpected sound of soft laughter broke the grim atmosphere.

Cedrick turned around dubiously. How can Gwendolyn laugh and not be enraged?

Her starry eyes were free from any trace of anger.

His heart dropped as he struggled to keep up his frosty veneer and glared. “Is something hilarious?”

Gwendolyn walked toward him and grabbed the arms of his office chair before bending down to plant a kiss on his forehead.

The cherry–red lipstick stain that left its mark was blatantly obvious.

“You!”

Cedrick raised his eyes to give her a death stare. “Didn’t you understand a word I said?”

Gwendolyn continued laughing recklessly as if she’d seen through the act he was putting up.

“Cedrick, you looked so convincing that I almost fell for it, but...”

She let her sentence hang mid–air while her gaze traveled to his hands on his thighs. Your acting skills still have room for improvement. Perhaps try not clenching your fists so tightly next time?”

Cedrick was caught off guard and instinctively hid his hands behind his back.

His act of pretense had been exposed!

There was nothing else he could do besides pretending to remain broodingly calm.

Yet the feisty Gwendolyn was intent on tearing down his defenses.

She gently hooked his chin and drew circles on it teasingly.

“Cedrick, I’m offended that

you’d think I would fall for such paltry tricks. I was too overcome with fury

last night to have seen through your disguise, but not today. I can see the cracks in your every word and gesture. You’ve almost sacrificed your life several times for my sake and can barely hide your love for me. I would be a fool to believe you’d fall for Evelyn so quickly. Are you pretending to get together with her to infuriate me? Still planning to deny everything at this point, are you?”

The petulance in her lyrical voice seemed to have a hypnotic effect on Cedrick.

Cedrick evaded her hand and her gaze. “What I said was the truth. You think too highly of me. That’s why

Gwendolyn lowered her face and kissed his left cheek, successfully cutting him off.

She was staking her claim by marking him with her carmine lipstick stain.

“Why you!”

‘Cedrick glared at her prickly.

“Are you mad at me?” Gwendolyn resumed tracing circles on his chain and smirked at him slyly like the cat that got the cream.

“You must be upset that I saw through your facade. But what can you do? I so enjoy seeing how you seethe yet still can’t seem to get rid of me!”

Cedrick pursed his lips and narrowed his eyes dangerously. “Gwendolyn, I warn you not to force hand!”

“Are you going to strike me? How terrifying!” She taunted peskily.

my

The smile had never left Gwendolyn’s face despite her claims of being afraid. “This is nothing new to me, anyway. Let’s see who will win this round with the state that you’re in.”

Cedrick felt slightly remorseful at that.

He had depleted all his energy last night when enduring chest pains compounded with his body’s degradation. As a result, he slept poorly.

It was a given that he’d lose miserably to Gwendolyn in a fight.

“Any decent man wouldn’t lay a hand on a woman!” His baritone voice was lofty and dismissive.

Gwendolyn burst out laughing as she reached for the lipstick in her purse to reapply it on her lips.

“It would be amusing to see how many lipstick stains I can leave on your face to go with each lie you insist on weaving.”

“Gwendolyn, behave!”

He’d barely finished speaking when Gwendolyn speedily smooched his cheeks and chin.

His entire face was covered in garish lipstick stains.

Gwendolyn’s eyes crinkled at the corners as she uttered in a singsong voice, “I’ll behave only when you decide to be forthright with me.”

Cedrick was rendered speechless. He’d underestimated how sharp Gwendolyn could be.

She was now making fun of him after exposing his act of deceit.

The tragedy was that he was absolutely helpless against her.