

Loving You In Secret by Debbie Meza

Chapter 151

After a moment of silence, Vicky muttered, "Well, uhh... Shall we go somewhere else?"

Nonchalantly, the man replied, "Sure."

After they left the shopping mall, the man suddenly thought of something and asked, "What's your name?"

Vicky's guard heightened at this question. 'This guy is strange,' she thought to herself.

She answered, "My surname is Shaw. You can call me Miss Shaw."

Enter title...

The man hummed in response, not bothering to persist in knowing her name.

"And what should I refer to you as?" asked Vicky.

The man glanced at her and uttered, "Kirby."

From the looks of it, the man did not have the intention to know her more, much to Vicky's relief. She stopped at a more expensive clothing store and asked, "Mister Kirby, what about this?"

Mister Kirby blinked. He took one glance at the store and said lazily, "Let's go into take a look."

While Mister Kirby was looking at the clothes, Vicky took the opportunity to send a message to Sebastian and Cece.

[Do I know have friends or know any man with the last name Kirby?]

Cece was the first one to reply. [Most of our customers are female. I don't remember anyone with the surname Kirby.]

A few minutes later, Vicky also received a reply from Sebastian. [You used to have a classmate with that last name.]

Worrying she might not recall, Sebastian then sent her two photos; one taken when they were still students and another taken most recently.

Vicky compared the photo and noticed it was not the man Sebastian said. She put away her phone and stared at the handsome man, who was taking his time to pick his clothes.

Of course, she had to compensate him because she damaged his shirt.

Nevertheless, she had a weird feeling about him, yet she could not put her finger on what it was.

Since she lost her memory, she was starting to speculate if he knew her from before. Undeniably, this was just her assumption and suspicion without any solid proof, especially when the man showed no signs that he knew her when they first met.

While she was deep in thought. Mister Kirby seemed to have picked a few clothes that he was satisfied with. The storekeeper took down those white shirts.

Vicky walked to him and asked, "Mister Kirby, have you picked the shirt you want?"

"Just a few. I think they should do it. I'll need to try it out first."

Vicky had wanted to be done with this man. She could not be bothered with the price and agreed quickly. "Okay."

Mister Kirby walked into the fitting room elegantly.

Vicky frowned as she looked at how calm the man was. 'Why do I...have the feeling like I'm the one accompanying him shopping?'

Mister Kirby might look like he was harmless, but he was rather troublesome. After trying a few shirts, he was still unsatisfied. He put on his own shirt and said, "Why don't we go somewhere else to take a look?" Vicky looked at his handsome face and asked, "How much is your shirt? Why don't I...pay you for the shirt?"

His attractive, rather beguiling eyes squinted at this. Vicky could not decide if he was smiling or not.

"Miss Shaw, are you beginning to be impatient?"

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"Mister Kirby, I don't mean that..." Vicky tried to explain herself.

However, Mister Kirby seemed indifferent to her attempt, and his expression hardened into apathy. "Let me be frank with you: this shirt was given to me by someone important."

"Someone important...gave it to you?" Vicky felt like she landed herself in hot soup. It was easy to repay or replace an item with something similar if it was damaged. However, it was hard to compensate for something that meant a lot to someone.

Enter title...

Mister Kirby looked at the nicely displayed white shirts on the shelf in the store and said, "Maybe you think money can buy everything, but to me, there are things you can't buy even if you have a lot of money."

Guilt gnawed at Vicky. "I'm sorry. I didn't know this shirt meant that much to you."

She looked at his shirt and thought deeply before she said, "Why don't you give your shirt to me first? I'll sew back the button..."

She was afraid he misunderstood something and quickly said, "Since this shirt is very meaningful to you, it won't be the first even if I buy the exact same one for you... So why don't I sew back the button and give it back to you?"

Mister Kirby looked at her dubiously. "You know how to sew?"

Vicky nodded.

He looked at her from top to bottom and talked with his lazy and deep voice, "Miss Shaw, I can tell you are from a wealthy family from the way you spend your money. You don't look like you are good at sewing. Plus..."

He smiled, yet his expression had a hint of malice. "I can forgive you because you didn't mean to pull off the button from my shirt, but if you damage it further, I'm not going to be as nice as I am now."

Vicky was undeterred as she smiled. "I'm a fashion designer, and sewing is a piece of cake to me. You don't have to worry about that."

Mister Kirby's eyes flashed. "A fashion designer?"

She took out a name card from her bag and handed it to him. "This is my name

card.”

He used his clean, slender fingers to accept the name card Vicky passed over and glanced at it. ‘Vicky Shaw, director of Shaw Atelier...’

After that, he looked at Vicky again. “Alright. I’ll trust you this time.”

“Let’s go get a shirt that you prefer so you can take off your shirt for me. After I sew the button back, I’ll send it back to you,” said Vicky. “What do you think?”

Mister Kirby agreed with her suggestion reluctantly. “Alright, then.”

This time, he did not try to trouble Vicky and chose a white shirt he could accept, changing out of his shirt afterward.

Before he said anything, Vicky took the initiative to pay using her credit card. As such, Mister Kirby made no remarks.

After they left the shop, Vicky said, “Mister Kirby, I’ll fix your shirt as soon as possible.”

He nodded. “I’m only free next weekend. Please call me ahead before you send it back.”

“What’s your phone number?’ Vicky asked.

He looked at the number on his name card and called her.

After confirming each other’s numbers, Mister Kirby left.

Vicky went home with his shirt in a bag.

Tyler only returned home when it was nearly 11 at night. He looked slightly irate and serious as if there was an evil vibe surrounding him.

Most of the time, Tyler did not like to show his true expression to the world.

Vicky hardly ever saw him in such a state, too.

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Vicky put down the book in her hand and asked, “What’s wrong? Is Miss Young’s condition...terrible?”

Tyler took off his jacket and replied, “She’s still alright.”

The topic ended with those words. He did not seem like he wanted to talk about it.

Vicky stayed silent for a few seconds and asked, “Have you had dinner?”

He paused. It was only at this moment he recalled dinner. “No.”

Enter title...

Vicky got out of bed. “You didn’t have your lunch and dinner... If you keep this up, your stomach condition will worsen.”

She looked at his handsome, indifferent face. “Go ahead and take your shower. I’ll cook supper for you.”

Looking at Vicky’s sweet, endearing face, the seriousness on his face disappeared a little. He responded softly.

Vicky left the room.

When Tyler was about to head for his shower, his phone rang. He answered the phone with a very cold tone. “What do you got?”

“The person who attacked Miss Young vanished. Right now, we can’t find where he is, but we can confirm he’s not after Miss Young. He’s more likely

It

Harry hesitated and told Tyler his assumption, “It’s most likely you’re the one

he's after. He's just using Miss Young to suppress you. I asked Maggie, Miss Young's manager, and she said she was lucky to find it out at that time. Otherwise... Miss Young will be in his hands now."

Tyler stood in front of the window and looked out at the night sky. He said nothing for a long time until Harry could not help but asked, "Mister Hart, what do you want to do?"

A reflection of his cold, vague, and heartless face showed up on the window. After a while, he said, "Send some people over to watch over her day and night."

"Yes, sir."

When Vicky took the supper to the room, Tyler had just finished his shower. He used the towel to cover his lower body. His hair was still wet, and water was dripping down his perfectly curved, toned muscle from his hair. It was enticing and alluring.

Vicky had seen his body numerous times, yet every time she did, she would still blush as memories of not-so-innocent moments washed over her. To cover up her flustered state, she placed the supper on the coffee table and cleared her throat.

"It's hard to digest oily food at night, so I made you soup. It's good to warm up your body, too."

Tyler glanced over and saw Vicky's eyelashes fluttering like butterfly wings, and this stirred his heart. Her blushing face was rosy, so alluring and enticing.

Tyler's eyes widened a little and his Adam's apple bobbed. He approached Vicky and before Vicky could react, he gave her a deep kiss.

The kiss was unlike the normally strong, overbearing, and purposeful type of kiss. This time, his kiss was very gentle and soft.

The unhappy feeling Vicky had since this afternoon after Tyler left her disappeared when he kissed her. The things she said were her true feelings and true thoughts. Despite that, she understood why Tyler did what he had to do. Nevertheless, that did not stop her from feeling uncomfortable when her husband rushed over to see his ex-girlfriend without even eating his lunch after he got a call.

Even if she knew Tyler did not want to be together with Sheila anymore.

Even if she knew Tyler did not actually like Sheila that much.

Even if deep down, she knew something else...

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In truth, Tyler was not really into Vicky.

Well, that was not entirely exact. Ever since he knew Vicky could play the piano, he did show her a little affection. Otherwise, why would he choose that day to bed her after they had been sleeping on the same bed together for so many nights?

Vicky knew there was no shortcut to a happy relationship. It was a huge improvement when he could treat her as his wife and live peacefully together with her, so she should not ask for too much.

Enter title...

Maybe humans were always a greedy bunch...or maybe she was starting to recover the feelings she had for him in her memory, which caused her to want more.

It was a very dangerous sign.

Tyler's kiss was starting to become ferocious from being gentle when he realized Vicky was not paying attention.

Vicky snapped out of her daze when she felt a tinge of pain. She looked into his eyes and felt like she had fallen into an abyss. Every time she saw that look, she had a feeling she was about to suffocate. Her instinct told her to keep away from him.

"Tyler, you have not eaten yet-mmph!"

Tyler's lips seized hers once more.

A sexy, deep voice rang beside her ear. 'It's still hot. Let it cool a bit.'

At first, she thought he only wanted a kiss. When she was thrown onto their king-size bed, she realized something was wrong.

Immediately, she resisted him, saying, 'No, you haven't eaten yet...'

There seemed to be fire burning in Tyler's deep eyes, and Vicky felt like her body was burning when he looked at her.

"Yeah," he spoke, voice low and husky, 'I'll eat you first and the food later.'

He then bent down and kissed Vicky with his thin lips, ceasing Vicky's speech.

The temperature in the room suddenly rose.

When Tyler was about to go further, his phone rang abruptly. He ignored it as his kiss with Vicky deepened. The ringing ended after no one picked it up, and the room returned to its quiet moment.

However, a few seconds later, the sharp ringtone rang urgently again. This time, they could not pretend to ignore it.

Vicky pushed him away, her attractive cheeks tinted pink.

"You better answer the phone." Her breath was uneven. 'It's probably urgent.'

If he did not answer it this time, she reckoned it would ring again.

Without a choice, Tyler let go of her and went to answer the phone. As soon as the phone was connected, he heard a woman's voice...and what sounded like sobs.

"Sheila's condition is unstable. Her fever isn't going down, and I've sent her to the emergency ward. Mister Tyler, please hurry over to see her!"

It was almost midnight, so it was very quiet. Maggie wept anxiously over the phone, and Vicky could hear it clearly from her place.

Tyler furrowed his brow and said plainly, 'Okay.'

Before Maggie said anything, he hung up the phone. He turned around and saw Vicky's clear eyes.

She looked at him. "Are you going?"

"Yes."

Vicky did not try to stop him and said, "You haven't eaten anything since the afternoon. Why don't you eat something before you go?"

Tyler made no moves.

"It's going to take just a few minutes," insisted Vicky. "I'm sure you have time for that no matter how urgent it is."

Tyler knew she was doing it for his good.
His brow relaxed as he replied with a deep voice, "Alright."
Vicky felt slightly better.
Tyler sat on the sofa and picked up the bowl of soup.

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Tyler's phone rang again after he took just two sips of Vicky's soup. He answered the phone and heard Maggie's anxious sobs. It was obvious she was struggling to form words.

"Mister Hart, are you on your way? The doctor said Sheila's condition is in a crisis... Is she...going to die? I...I don't dare to sign..."

"Ask the doctor to do the surgery," answered Tyler calmly. "I'll be there right away."

"But... But the doctor said he's not allowed to operate if there's no one to sign..." whimpered Maggie.

Enter title...

"I'll handle it." He hung up the phone and called Harry.

"Ask the hospital to do the operation, and get a professional medical team to the hospital," he instructed.

"Yes, Mister Hart. I'll do it now," Harry replied.

After Tyler hung up the phone, he stood up and said to Vicky, "I need to go."

Vicky managed to hear a little from the conversation. She thought Sheila only had a minor injury from shooting the movie, but she did not expect she was in such a serious condition that the doctor issued a medical crisis notice.

Since that was the case, Vicky could no longer insist Tyler finish the soup. Plus, she figured Tyler did not have the mood to finish, too. Thus, she did not stop him.

"Alright. Go."

When Tyler wanted to leave the room to change his clothes, he heard Vicky asking, "Are you coming back tonight?"

His hand paused when he held the doorknob, and he turned to look back. "If the surgery is successful, perhaps I will return."

After that, Vicky did not ask anything else.

The night was breezy. She gazed out the window into the night sky and did not move for a long time.

Tyler did not come home that night, and Vicky had insomnia. In the early morning, Vicky sat at the dining table and kept on looking at the clock on the wall. It was already seven in the morning, yet Tyler had not returned.

As she thought of Tyler's words before he left, she furrowed her brow. "If he's not back yet, does that mean...the surgery wasn't successful?"

After much thinking, she decided to give Tyler a call. Just as the dial tone rang, however, the door opened.

She looked over and saw the handsome man entering. His handsome face looked gloomy as if there was a dark cloud over his head.

Vicky hung up the phone and walked over. "How is Miss Young?"

After a restless night, Tyler looked exhausted. Nonetheless, he managed a

reply. "She's out of danger for now."

Vicky looked at him. She hesitated for a few seconds and asked, "Where is she hurt?"

"She got captured during a scene with a group of ensemble and got stabbed."

If it was so serious that the doctor had announced her medical crisis, Vicky knew Sheila must have been severely injured.

She asked curiously, "Why did that ensemble capture her? Are they...her obsessed fans?"

Tyler thought hard for a moment. He knew that sooner or later, she was going to find out the truth, so he said, "No, it's an enemy of mine. He pretended to be in an ensemble and tried to kidnap her."

Sheila was a famous celebrity that many people dreaded to meet. To avoid the fans and reporters from disturbing her, she had two bodyguards protecting her. Thus, it was hard to attempt a kidnapping.

In addition, they were in Stoneford City, Tyler's territory. Tyler's enemy did not dare to do anything at a great scale, so they thought of this method to kidnap Sheila.

Vicky did not expect that was the reason why Sheila got hurt. She furrowed her brow and asked, "Your enemy? Why did he want to kidnap Sheila..."

Just as soon as she asked the question, she thought of something and stopped talking.

She had asked a stupid question. It was very obvious why Tyler's enemy chose Sheila.

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Tyler's enemy must have thought Sheila was very important to Tyler. As long as they kidnapped her, they could use her to threaten him.

Perhaps Tyler had many things on his mind, but he did not notice Vicky's odd expression.

He said calmly, "Sheila was badly hurt. Yesterday night, an unknown person went to the hospital again. I fear that they've yet given up."

He paused and looked at Vicky. "I'm going to be very busy lately."

Vicky stayed silent for a few seconds and nodded. "Alright. I understand."

Enter title...

He walked to her and gazed at her. "Sheila is hurt because of me. I can't just ignore her."

Vicky smiled as she looked at his handsome, serious face. "I know."

He continued to gaze at her, his blue eyes reflecting her face. "I don't have any feelings for her anymore."

He was never a person who liked to explain or thought it was necessary to explain anything. Since he willingly explained himself, it showed he cared about her.

Vicky, albeit touched by this, felt a tinge of sadness too. Nonetheless, she responded, "I know. I won't misunderstand you."

Tyler was still gazing at her as if he wished he could look into her heart to read her true feelings. Vicky did not avoid the gaze and smiled helplessly.

“Come on, you’ve been busy for the whole night and didn’t eat anything. Go upstairs and change before you come down for breakfast.”

She looked calm and gentle. Her voice was soft too, without any signs of anger. Same as always, she still cared about his well-being.

Suddenly, Tyler reached out and pulled her into his embrace. His clear, alluring voice rang beside her ear. “Don’t think too much.”

Vicky leaned at his chest and replied, “Okay.”

After breakfast, Tyler went to work, and Vicky went to her studio not long after.

She took out the man’s shirt from yesterday and carefully observed the thread of the button. After that, she looked for the same thread and sewed the button back. 1

Cece, who just returned from visiting a customer, saw how busy Vicky was in the studio and walked over curiously. “Vicky, are you...sewing a shirt?” she asked.

As fashion designers, Vicky and Cece were only responsible for the designing part. They had partners that they had worked with for a long time to manufacture the clothing. It had been a long time since Vicky sewed clothing personally.

“No. The button came off, so I’m sewing it back.”

Sewing a button back was not a hard job for Vicky. In fact, it would take just a few minutes to get the job done. However, Vicky took her time slowly and sewed it carefully because she remembered Mister Kirby said the shirt was extremely important to him.

Cece smiled when she saw how concentrated and serious Vicky was. “I heard the rich always wear new clothes every day and never wear them again like they’d never wear it if it was dirty, what more should the button come off... I didn’t know Mister Hart was such a thrifty person.”

After the button was sewn back, Vicky looked up. “It’s not his shirt.”

Cece was taken aback. “Huh? This shirt isn’t Mister Hart’s?”

“Yes.”

Vicky then told Cece everything that happened yesterday.

Dumbfounded, Cece said the first thought that was on her mind. “Did he do it on purpose?”

Vicky shook her head. “It doesn’t look like it.”

She looked at the shirt in her hand. “The material of this shirt is very expensive. Not everyone can afford it.”

Cece knew this too and could tell the shirt was expensive. “What if he spent all of his money just to use this shirt? Plus...”

Cece pointed out the crucial part of the whole incident. “If it’s an expensive shirt, why is the quality so bad? The button can’t possibly fall off so easily. If this isn’t a knockoff, then that man could be fake.”

Vicky’s pupils flashed as she recalled how noble the man was.

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It was easy to act like a different person, but some things just could not be faked-especially a person’s temperament.

Vicky grew up in an upper-class society. Even though she had lost her memory, she could differentiate the real and the fake with just one look.

Thinking of this, she said, "Maybe he wore this shirt very often, so the button became loose after a while."

Cece thought and agreed, "Maybe."

Enter title...

After Vicky sewed the button back to the shirt, she ironed it nicely and hung it on the shelves so she could send it back to Mister Kirby next weekend. 1

When Vicky just arrived home at night, her phone rang. It was a call from Tyler.

"I'm busy tonight, so I won't make it back for dinner. Go ahead and eat; don't wait for me."

Vicky held her phone and said, "Okay."

"Alright, I'm hanging up."

Just before Tyler hung up, Vicky asked, "Are you coming back tonight?"

He paused for a second and answered, "Yes."

Vicky did not ask anymore and said, "Alright. Continue what you're doing."

After her dinner, Vicky went out walking like normal before she went back to her study to draw her design. At around 10 at night, she shut down her computer and went to shower.

By the time she finished, it was already half past ten. The sky was already very dark, and Tyler was not home yet.

Vicky picked up her phone to look at the screen, only to find no texts or calls from Tyler. She paused a long while as she stared at his contact number, her finger hovering over his name, before she decided to go through it and pressed [Call],

As his wife, it was normal to call her husband and ask about him when he was still outside late at night. Nevertheless, she hesitated.

Beep, beep, beep! The dial tone was extremely clear when it was a quiet night. No one picked up the phone for a long time.

Vicky lowered her head.

Her hair was let loose as she was about to go to bed. It covered her face, thus her expression could not be seen.

The phone got cut off automatically, and Vicky did not call anymore. Several minutes later, however, her phone rang.

"I was busy and I didn't hear my phone ring," said Tyler, sounding evidently tired.

"It's alright," replied Vicky, sounding normal. "I was just calling to ask when you're coming back."

"I'm heading back now," Tyler replied.

"Have you had your dinner? Otherwise, I'll cook for you," said Vicky.

"I had eaten," Tyler said.

"Okay, then. I'll wait for you to come back," Vicky said.

After she hung up, she did not fall asleep immediately. Instead, she picked up a book and continued reading where she left off. She thought Tyler would be back very soon, seeing as he mentioned he would be back soon.

In the end, she waited until 12 that night, and Tyler was not back yet.

Sleepiness had gotten to Vicky when it was half past twelve, but just as she was thinking of calling Tyler and asking his whereabouts, there was noise coming from the sound.

Tyler was back.

There seemed to be a dark cloud over his head. Obviously, his day was not a good one.

When Vicky wanted to say something, she suddenly smelled a faint sanitizer aroma.

Maybe the way she looked at him was too direct.

As Tyler turned around to look, their eyes me

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Tyler's eyes looked dark when he saw Vicky leaning on the headboard looking at him. "Why haven't you slept?"

Vicky's voice was calm and gentle. There was no expression on her face. "Didn't I say I'd wait for you?"

Tyler paused for a while before walking to her. His tall shadow covered her entire body. When he got close enough, the smell of disinfectant on him was so thick that she felt nauseous.

Tyler looked at her calm face and said, "I was going to come back, but the hospital called and said Sheila's condition shifted into a more dangerous state, Enter title..."

so I went over to take a look."

Vicky did not continue the topic. "It's very late. Go shower and rest early."

Tyler remained where he was and gazed at her. "Don't wait until late hours from now on."

Vicky nodded. "Okay. But you have to remember to call me or text me, or I'll worry about you."

Tyler must have felt touched by words that his dark expression slowly eased off. He bent down and kissed her forehead. "Okay. I'll take my shower now."

Vicky looked at his tall, handsome back. The smell of disinfectant never left her. For the next couple of days, Tyler seemed to be extremely busy, and he would return home later each day.

Vicky did not ask if he was busy with work or Sheila; there was no meaning even if she asked. Regardless of what it was, she did not have any reason to stop him.

Nevertheless, the faint disinfectant smell on his body lingered in the air every day as if it was his perfume that he sprayed on his body.

One night, Tyler surprisingly went back home before dinner time to eat. At that moment, Vicky realized they had not sat together to eat for a long time as she saw him at the dining table.

For the past few days, he left before she woke up and normally returned after she had fallen asleep at night. Except for the necessary phone calls and text messages, they did not speak to each other very often.

"The food will get cold if you continue to daydream," Tyler said with his clear and crisp voice from across Vicky.

In the meantime, he grabbed some food and placed it on her plate. Vicky looked up to see his deep blue eyes that resembled the color of the ocean. Suddenly, her heart skipped a beat.

“Okay.” She quickly ate the food Tyler took for her and finished everything. When they finished dinner, Tyler usually would go to the study to work, but not tonight. He went out walking with her.

As the sun was setting down, the sky was dyed with hues of yellow, orange, and red. Soon, the sky turned dark.

There was a park near the mansion with a good greenery view. Every day after dinner, Vicky would go to the park to take a walk to help with digestion. She looked at the tall handsome man beside her and said softly, “You can do your work if you’re busy. You don’t have to accompany me walking.”

In fact, she understood Tyler must have felt he had not spent much time with her lately. Since he was less busy today, he thought he could spend some time with her.

Tyler naturally held her hand. “It’s alright. I’m not busy today.”

The breezing wind blew on their cheeks. It felt so comfortable, especially when Vicky could not detect the smell of disinfectant in the air anymore. The air felt fresher.

Vicky did not insist anymore and enjoyed the rare quiet moment.

The sky turned completely dark.

When everything ended, Tyler carried Vicky into the restroom to take a shower. A hungry man was absolutely terrifying.

At that moment, Vicky thought all the things Tyler did, having dinner with her and walking with her after dinner, were all for that moment. After they finished walking, he showed his true intention.

When the bathtub was filled with water, Tyler put Vicky into the bathtub. She was completely worn out, but she felt less fatigued after she enjoyed the warm, comfortable bath.

Suddenly, Tyler’s long fingers pressed against her temples.

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There was a layer of rough calluses on his fingertips, yet they were cold like diamonds as well.

Vicky opened her eyes at that moment and saw Tyler’s handsome, perfect face. The strength he used to massage her temples was neither too soft nor too heavy. It was just right. Vicky was so comfortable that she closed her eyes again.

“I didn’t know you knew how to massage someone.” Her voice was not soft like usual. Instead, it sounded slightly smoky.

Enter title...

The way he massaged was very smooth and trained. This was not his first time, surely.

“Yeah,” he replied plainly.

Vicky opened her eyes again. “You took...a massage course before?”

Tyler suddenly paused for a while. “No.”

Vicky was not an expert in massage, but from the way he did it, the strength he used, and how comfortable it was, she could tell he was an expert in it.

Suddenly, a thought flashed past her mind as another possibility surfaced.

“You used to...massage someone before?” she blurted.

Tyler’s pupils wavered a little, but he did not answer.

Vicky regretted it immediately. What was the point of asking about the past? It was done and gone, anyway.

She shut her eyes awkwardly and tried to change the topic. ‘Did you bring my pajamas in?’

“Yes,” he replied.

“That’s good,” she said.

After that, neither of them spoke.

Once they finished, Tyler carried her back to the bed. Vicky’s exhausted body could no longer withstand the tiredness anymore after the warm bath and comfortable massage. As soon as she laid down on the bed, she closed her eyes and fell asleep.

She did not know how long she had been sleeping. Suddenly, a vibration sound rang in the quiet, dim room. When Vicky was momentarily awake, she heard Tyler purposely lowering his voice.

“I know. I’ll be there right away.”

He hung up quickly before he stared at Vicky, his clear eyes piercing the darkness.

Even when Vicky closed her eyes, she could feel the pressure from the way Tyler was staring at her. She did not move or say anything, pretending she was asleep.

A few seconds later, he looked away. He tried to be quiet when he got down from the bed. Since he did not switch on the light, he blended into the darkness. Vicky tried to control herself from nosing in. Alas, she failed.

“Are you going out?” she spoke, her voice husky with drowsiness.

He looked at her again with a look she could not ignore. “Did I wake you up? M

“Yeah,” Vicky answered.

After a few seconds of silence, Tyler said, “Something happened at the hospital. I need to go and have a look.”

Vicky curled her lips into a sarcastic smile silently. What a coincidence; something happened with Sheila just because Tyler did not go to the hospital today, i

The room was very dark. Neither of them could tell the expression on the other’s face.

After a long time, she asked, “Are you coming back later?”

She realized she had been asking this question a lot lately.

“Yes,” Tyler answered.

“Okay,” Vicky said and closed her eyes again.

Tyler stood in the dark, not moving an inch.

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Tyler was still looking at Vicky sharply. Vicky did not know what he could see in

the dark, but she did not open her eyes or move, acting as though she was asleep.

She could not tell how long it had been. When she was finally falling asleep, Tyler finally left. At first, she thought Tyler might not come back.

When she was deep in her sleep, she heard someone opening the door and walking. Shortly, the other side of the bed sunk a little. Later, she was pulled into a familiar pair of arms.

Enter title...

The smell of the sanitizer floated in the air. The pungent smell was terrible and it disgusted her and even woke her from her sleep. Her instinct kicked in and she tried to struggle away from the hug.

Tyler paused. Seconds later, his voice rang in the dimmed room, "You're awake?"

"Yeah." Vicky moved over to the other side of the bed and said softly, "The disinfectant smell on your body is too strong. I'm not very comfortable with it."

After a moment of silence, he said, "I'll go take a shower."

He thus got down from the bed and went to the bathroom. After he finished his shower, and Vicky having fallen back to sleep, he got onto the bed and pulled Vicky into his arms.

She struggled for a while before she fell back to sleep in his arms.

A silver light pierced the sky. Thunder roared as lightning struck the sky.

The sky rumbled.

Vicky's eyelids flapped open.

A downpour was unleashed, and the rain slammed against the window. Long watermark streaks ran down the glass as though they were teardrops.

She sat on the bed and looked to the side unconsciously. It was empty, and the side of the bed looked undisturbed as though no one had slept with her.

She looked at the time. It was half past one in the early morning.

'Tyler. Js not back yet?'

She rubbed her aching glabella and picked up the book—the same one she was reading before she slept—that dropped to the bed, putting it back on the bedside table.

As the thunder rumbled in the skies, jolting her awake from her slumber, she walked to the window and gazed into the rain.

The cool, gloomy rainy night was like a deep abyss that no light could penetrate inside. The only light that appeared in the world was the occasional lighting.

She picked up the phone and took a look.

There was no notification on her screen. No text messages or missed calls.

For a long time, she stood in front of the window and looked outside. Suddenly, she thought of something and opened the old text messages she received. The last text message she received from Tyler was at five in the evening.

[Don't wait for me to have your dinner.]

She moved her finger and instantly, all the text messages they sent appeared before her eyes. Those were the most recent text messages they sent to each other. Most of them were messages where he told her he was not going back for dinner, for her to not wait for him, and him asking her to sleep early. They

were simple and short.

She slides to the later messages before Sheila was injured.

Compared to the shorter, simpler text messages she received recently, those text messages were far more interesting. She would remind Tyler to eat his meal at the right time. Also, a message that he sent to tell her the maid had prepared breakfast for her after she slept till late after he had overworked her the night before.

In fact, they also sent each other boring messages, too.

Vicky curled her lips into a smile while she read those messages. Alas, the smile did not reach her eyes.

She thought for a while and sent Tyler a text

However, Rickard did not understand why he felt that way. He shifted his gaze and said nonchalantly, "Since you've agreed, do what you're supposed to do and don't be an eyesore here."

Hesper glanced at the child, reluctant to part with him. She wanted to stay there for a while more, but the child was tired. His soft face was swaying from left and right drowsily.

Hesper could not bear to disturb the baby's sleep, so she returned to her room indifferently.

She did not manage to rest well during the first month post delivery and she was tormented by Madam Duval over and over again. Apart from the mental and emotional trauma, she was experiencing malnutrition as well.

She managed to wait until it was dinner time yet Madam Duval sent someone to tell her, "Madam said that you need more rest due to your recent delivery, so you don't need to join dinner downstairs!"

Hesper did not speak and instead covered her empty belly with a blanket in silence.

She hardly had a normal meal since the delivery, so she starved so much that she looked emaciated.

However, she would be looking for trouble if she were to head to dinner when Madam Duval wanted to stir up trouble on purpose.

In the dining room, Rickard looked at the empty spot at the table and furrowed his eyebrows. "Where's Hesper? Why isn't she coming to dinner?"

The servant avoided his gaze while Madam Duval said unconcernedly next to him, "If she doesn't want to come, that's fine too. She's a grown woman. Could it be that she would rather starve herself?"

As she spoke, she passed him the ribs and said, "Set your mind and eat. You've been traveling everywhere during this period of time, so you've lost weight."

As Rickard looked at the ribs before him, the image of Hesper's emaciated figure came into his mind.

She was so weak and skinny that one squeeze could shatter her.

He pursed his lips and said in an indifferent tone, "She has just given birth, so she needs to replenish her nutrition. Otherwise, outsiders are going to claim that the Duvals are torturing their daughter-in-law."

"She isn't considered the Duvals' daughter-in-law." Noticing that Rickard was looking at her, she corrected herself unwillingly by saying, "I know, I know. I'll order someone to prepare some food for her. The food served on this table is all heavily-processed, high in oil and flavor, so it's not so suitable for her in her current condition, right?"

Rickard did not know about that, but he knew that he would not allow Hesper to starve to death.

He still had some matters to attend to, so he left the Duvals' residence after dinner.

Madam Duval threw her cutlery soon afterward and pulled a long face. "She's a pain in the *ss. Why do we have to worry about her meal? Doesn't she know how to deal with it herself when she's able-bodied?"

"Precisely." Sophia did not have the courage to speak out of turn when Rickard was around, but she was furious. Now that Rickard was gone, she immediately revealed her sarcastic expression fearlessly.

"She wasn't that spoiled in the past, and it was very normal for her not to eat for days. Why can't she do it now? Does she really think that she's superior and can abuse her power just because she gave birth to the eldest grandchild of the Duvals?"

"Dream on, I won't give her the chance to do so."

Madam Duval let out a grunt and glanced at the leftover food on the table that was so messy that not even a dog would eat it.

"Come, put all the leftovers in a bowl and serve it to Hesper's room so she can enjoy the feast!"

Meanwhile, Hesper was already exhausted from starvation. She looked at the leftover stew in the bowl served before her in silence. If one were to describe it bluntly, even the Duvals' dog ate better than her.

Noticing Hesper's lack of action, Sophia swung a kick at the bed rampantly. "Eat it, quick! Aren't you starving? We made this especially for you."

She placed her hands on her waist, and her expression filled with pride and contempt. "Hesper, this is the only meal that's served to you. Are you sure that you don't want to eat? If you don't, you're going to be malnourished. How are you going to feed your precious son then?"

Hesper shifted her gaze.

She could bear the hunger but how could she do this to her son.

The child came from her, so she would protect him with her life.

"I'll eat!"

She picked up a fork, but as soon as she got close, she furrowed her brows because she was choked by the pungent smell produced from the mixed food.

The sight of the food, with a thick layer of oil from the spices covering it, was nauseating.

Hesper tried her best to choose the less oily food, but she gagged as soon as she took a bite.

Sophia scolded in a stern voice, "Shut your mouth. Just try to throw up if you dare! You won't have anything else to eat if you throw up!"

Hesper raised her head and glanced at her in rage. She knew that Sophia was right.

She didn't understand why they would treat her like this. She had not committed any serious crime apart from marrying Rickard. Why would they hurt her and humiliate her?

Just bear with it and you can extricate yourself when grandfather is cured.

Hesper told herself in her heart and swallowed the food with tears streaming down her face.

"Tsk ts. You're really eating, huh." Sophia began to ridicule her again.

"You don't even care about your most basic self-respect and integrity anymore just so you can continue to stay in the Duvals' residence? I've never encountered someone as shameless as you."

Hesper said coldly, "It's your brother who wouldn't agree on getting a divorce."

“Bah!”

Sophia refused to believe Hesper’s remark. She was infuriated by the sight of Hesper’s calmness.

“My brother wouldn’t agree on getting a divorce? Don’t forget that his lover is back. Frankly, my brother headed out in a rush after dinner for an appointment. Who do you think he is meeting?”

Hesper felt her heart wrench in pain. She told herself that she would not mind, yet she could not refrain herself from feeling envy upon hearing Sophia’s remark.

Sophia could see the agony in Hesper’s eyes. She said with a sneer, “How dare you claim that my brother wouldn’t agree on getting a divorce in your current state?”

She took two steps forward and clutched Hesper’s fair, clean lower jaw with her hand, her eyes bursting with malicious hatred.

“But don’t worry. I’m here, and I will make sure to facilitate their relationship so you can be demoted from your position of Mrs. Duval!”

Upon saying that, she swung her hand with great force, which pushed Hesper to the side, before she left, feeling pleased with herself.

Hesper maintained her body position for a long time without moving. She looked at the ceiling absentmindedly and thought about the past.

She thought about how deeply in love Rickard and Juniper were in the past.

She remembered how Rickard was constantly distracted and his temperament changed after Juniper left the country.

She felt as if she could see Juniper smiling bleakly with her hands outstretched.

“Did you really go and see her, Rickard?”

Rickard and Juniper sat across from each other in a luxury condo located in Leneriv.

After a long time, he said, “You called me here in a rush. What happened?”

Tears welled up in Juniper’s eyes when she heard the estrangement in his voice.

“Rickard, are you still angry at me? I knew that you resent me when I met you in the company the other day. However, I have my difficulties too!”

“It’s passed, and I’m not angry at you.”

"I don't believe that!" Juniper bit her lower lip tightly. She was so beautiful, the sight of her crying made one feel pity for her.

"If you're not angry at me, why won't you come and see me when you know that I'm back? Don't you know that I've been waiting for you all this time?"
