KINDA SWEET 331

Chapter 331	You Reall	/ Are Sil	ly
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Archie had gotten ahold of the news too, but compared to Natalia's worry, he looked at it more openly.

"If the young man has his own ideas, he wouldn't compromise for family. If he does, then it proves that

he never had the ability and will to become independent in the first place. If not Jessica, he would have

married another woman anyway for profit and exchange of interests. There's no difference.

Natalia was still a little worried.

"But she's..."

Archie looked at her deeply, grasping her hand tight.

"Don't be afraid." He said lightly, "The Bissels and the McCarthys are on opposing sides to begin with.

And with everything that woman's done to you, whether or not she marries into the Bissel family, she's

never going to become friends with you. So with her dead set as your enemy, whether or not they get

married makes no difference at all."

Natalia lifted her head to look at him, her fine brow showing a bit of anxiety.

"Is it really all right? If the Kawns really stood by the Bissels, can you handle it alone?"

Archie smiled.

He reached out, tilted her face up, and stroked her cheeks with his fingers, saying softly after a while,
"So long as you stay by my side, I can handle it."
Natalia started.
The man's gaze was so gentle and so firm, brimming with inexplicable force, that her heart eventually
stilled.
She reached out and took his waist, leaning her face against his chest.
"I'll always stay by your side. No matter what happens, we'll always be together."
Archie smiled happily.
"Don't worry. Even if the Bissel family tries anything, it won't be in these couple days. They'll at least
wait until after the holidays to move. So enjoy this holiday to yourself, okay?"
Natalia nodded and finally said "okay".

Meanwhile, in Julio.
Naturally, the Kawn family was bustling with activity over the holidays as well.

As a major enterprise tycoon of Julio, Brandon had an endless stream of people coming to visit. And as the young master of the Kawns, James had to stay and deal with business as well. The house servants were so busy they were going insane. From the living room to the kitchens, they worked nonstop. With that, Victoria, who had nothing to do, became the most leisurely person in the entire house. She couldn't be bothered to go liaise with anyone, so she didn't go downstairs, even taking her lunch in her room. Brandon was too busy socializing to pay attention to her. James, though, did send someone up to ask her if she wanted to go down and mingle. A lot of seniors from the company had come around, and she could have at least greeted them. Victoria, though, refused. She'd never thought of taking part in the company. With her father and brother there, it was entirely enough. So she couldn't be bothered to go talk to those people as well.

James was exasperated, but he knew his sister's temper, so he didn't force her.

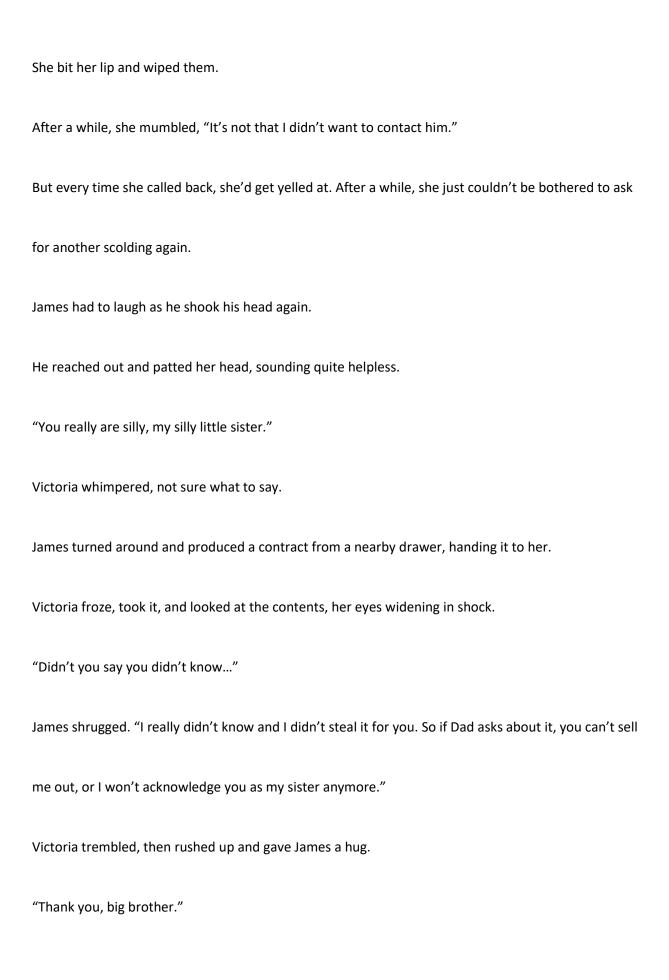
Because there were so many guests and Victoria wouldn't come out and help, they lacked a mistress hosting the household, and even with all their servants, the workload was too much. Brandon decided to up and rent a compartment at a nearby five-star hotel, getting ready to take everyone out for dinner. Victoria didn't want to go and stayed in her room watching TV. Brandon was still feuding with her, so he ignored her. There were servants at home and already finished meals, so she wouldn't starve to death. The minute it was time, he took everyone out. Hearing the rabble fade, Victoria shut down her laptop, closed her eyes for a moment, and came out wearing slippers. Seeing that she was finally coming out of her room, one of the servants greeted her. "Where are you going, madam?" Victoria waved it off. "No need to worry about me. I'm just taking a walk."

Seeing that, the servant didn't ask about it and turned to leave.

Victoria went to the office and looked around.

She couldn't find her contract. She knew that even though she was flesh and blood with Brandon, it really didn't matter to the man if he got down to business. If she wanted to get back into acting free of her father's control, she had to find that contract. But even after searching the entire office, she couldn't find a single trace. After searching for a while, Victoria lost her patience and stood. She was about to call and ask if her brother had seen the contract, but the moment she turned around, she saw James standing there in the doorway. She jumped, thumping her own chest. "James! What are you doing? You scared me half to death." James shook his head helplessly. He strode over, rearranging the places Victoria had messed up, then said, "Don't waste your effort. Dad's keeping that contract to himself. Without his permission, no one can get their hands on it. He's wary of you, so why would he leave something like that at home?" Victoria blinked, then frowned.

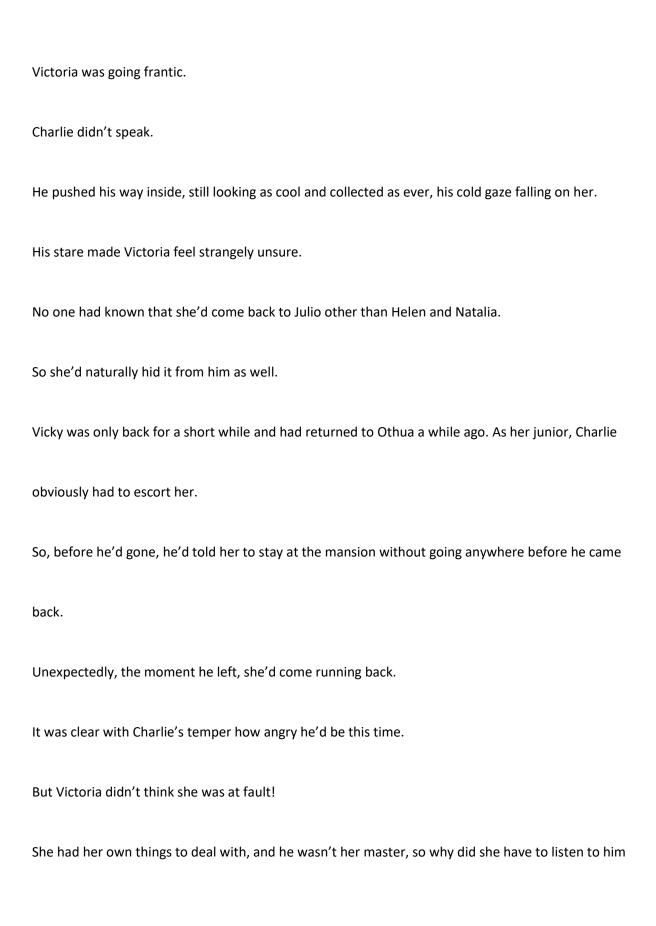


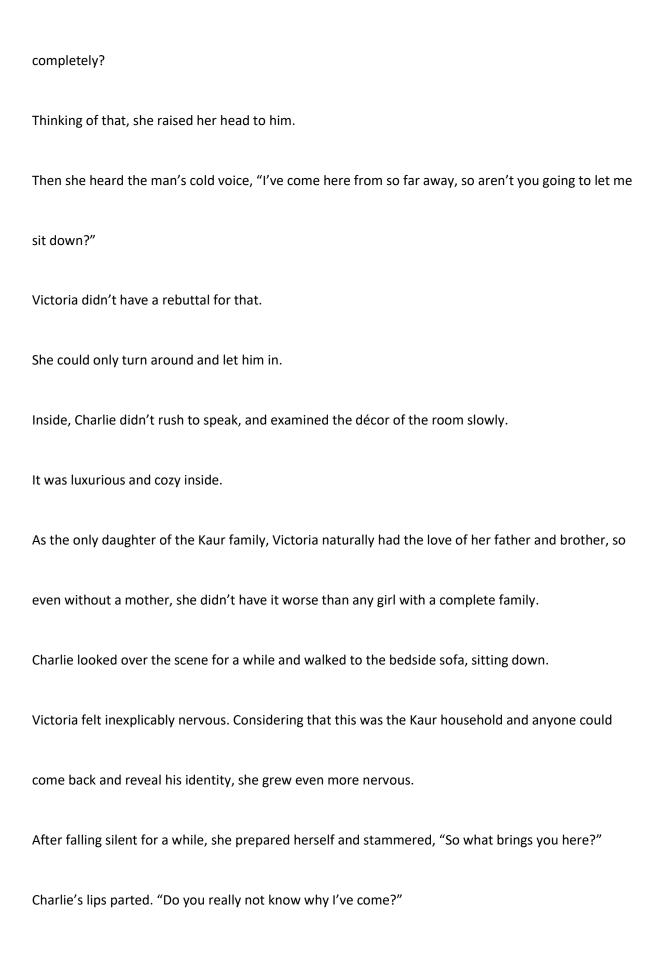


Chapter 332 Let Her Go Free James smiled and held her, patting her back. "If you really want to thank me, next time you see Dad, stop butting heads with him from now on. You're not a child anymore; you're a mother yourself. It's time you wised up a bit." Victoria felt her heart ache and her nose grow sour as she nodded, eyes red. James had snuck back midway, and he was still rushing to meet people at the hotel, so he didn't stay long. He exchanged a few more words with Victoria and left. With the contract in hand and to avoid the old man coming back and finding out in the night – therefore starting another argument – Victoria wasn't about to linger at home. She packed up her things and got ready to leave. Unexpectedly, just as she finished packing, a servant called from outside the door, "Guest for you, madam." She blinked, not sure who would come for her at this hour in Julio.

She'd come back in secret and hadn't shown her face in daytime, so even most of the guests didn't











But a brief pause later, she changed the topic.

She looked up at him determinedly. "Yes. I deserve to die in your eyes. I betrayed you and lied to you.

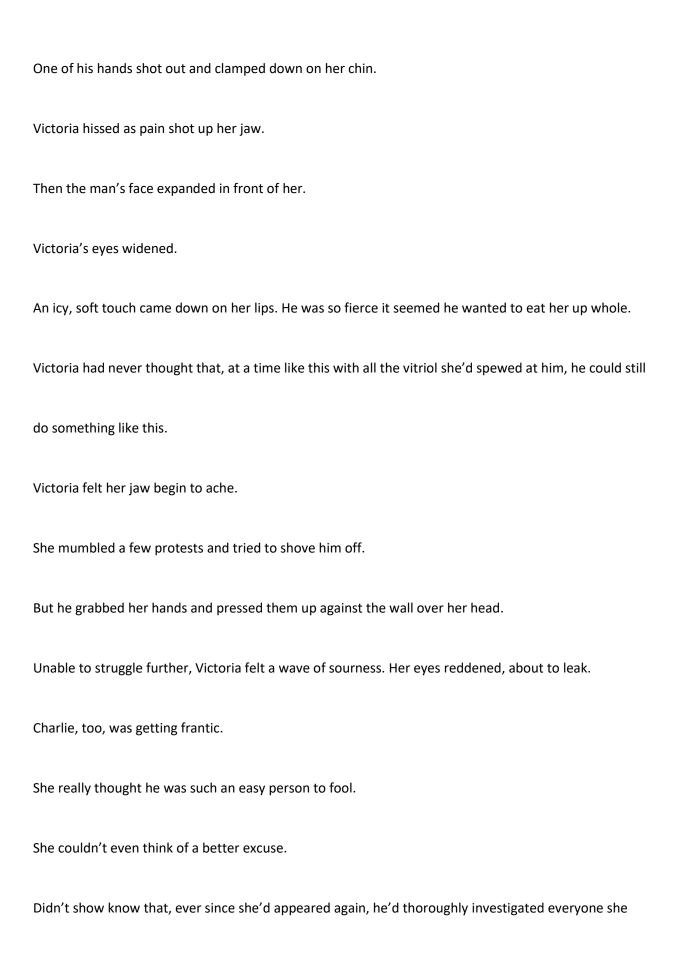
But if that's the case, why did you come back to me?"

Charlie floundered.

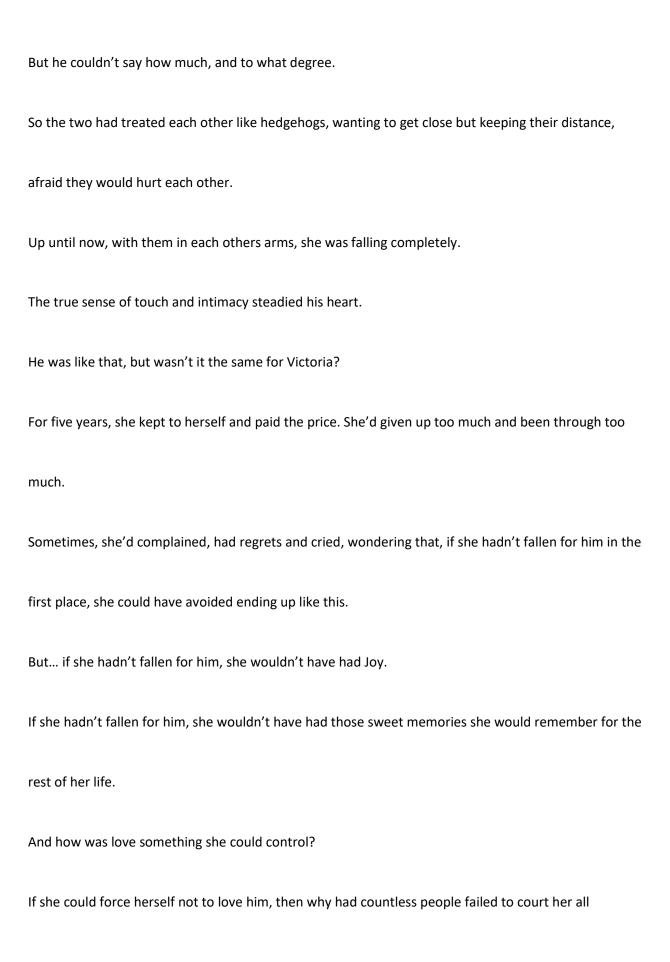
Victoria smiled bitterly. "I'll admit that I was at fault five years ago. But I should have given back enough during those five years! Now, you know full well your Stevenson family can't accept me, so can you leave them for me? Can you give up the Stevensons and everything they stand for? You can't! See, that's the biggest issue between us. I'm aware what type of person I am and what my identity is. That night, you came to me on your own, but left me to deal with all the consequences myself! I lost everything just for loving you, Charlie Peck! My career, my life, my family! And you? You're still the high and mighty young master of the Stevenson family. You're still the head of the Stevenson enterprise. You can still stand up tall in the spotlight. If we really got together, the only chip I have is your love. But if I lose it one day, what do I have? You go on and on that I shouldn't have left you, Charlie, but have you thought about why I left? I'm tired of it all. I'm begging you, let me go! Let me go free, and let







knew and everywhere she'd been in these five years?
He knew perfectly well who she'd contacted and what people were at her side.
Did she really think he was so easy to lie to that she'd use such a flimsy lie?
Come on!
He knew that she wasn't dating Max. She'd never seen any other men within these five years.
But hearing her say that Max was her boyfriend out loud still drew out a surge of jealousy.
That's why he needed to punish her fiercely.
Victoria had been pressed up against the wall originally, but somehow, she found herself in his tight
embrace, one of his hands against the back of her head.
She still knew to resist when they first started.
But this man had such good technique, and the two hadn't really practiced in those five years.
As they kissed, she slowly lost the urge to fight.
Feeling her change in his arms, Charlie's eyes finally grew warm.
He'd always known that she had feelings for him.



throughout these five years?

Why was it that it was always him who appeared in her mind whenever she woke up deep in the night?

Her heart ached and she trembled in his embrace, a boiling hot tear sliding from her eye.

He might have been kissing her and thoroughly moved, but he did still keep an eye on her reactions.

Knowing that she wasn't refusing and seeing her pain and agony and longing for what it was, he was

sure that she still felt the same way as she did five years ago.

And because of that, he didn't miss that one tear.

The man sighed lightly and released her, rubbing that one droplet from her cheek.

It was an incredibly gentle gesture, as if he was coming up on a long-lost treasure.

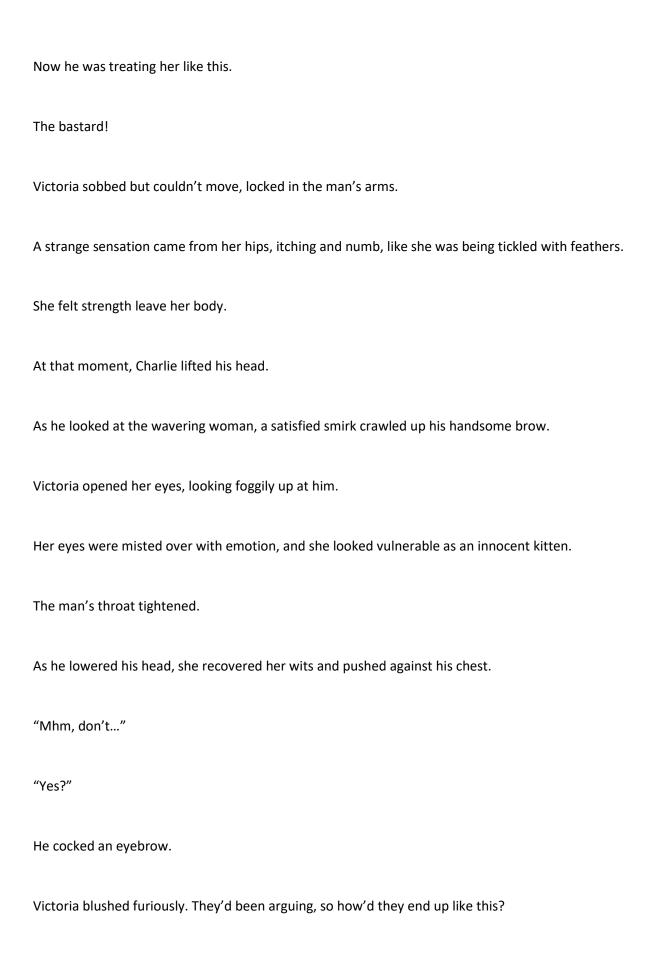
Victoria, though, cried even harder. All those years of resentment erupted from her in an instant.

Ever since she was small, she'd been the apple of everyone's eye. Who hadn't spoiled her rotten and

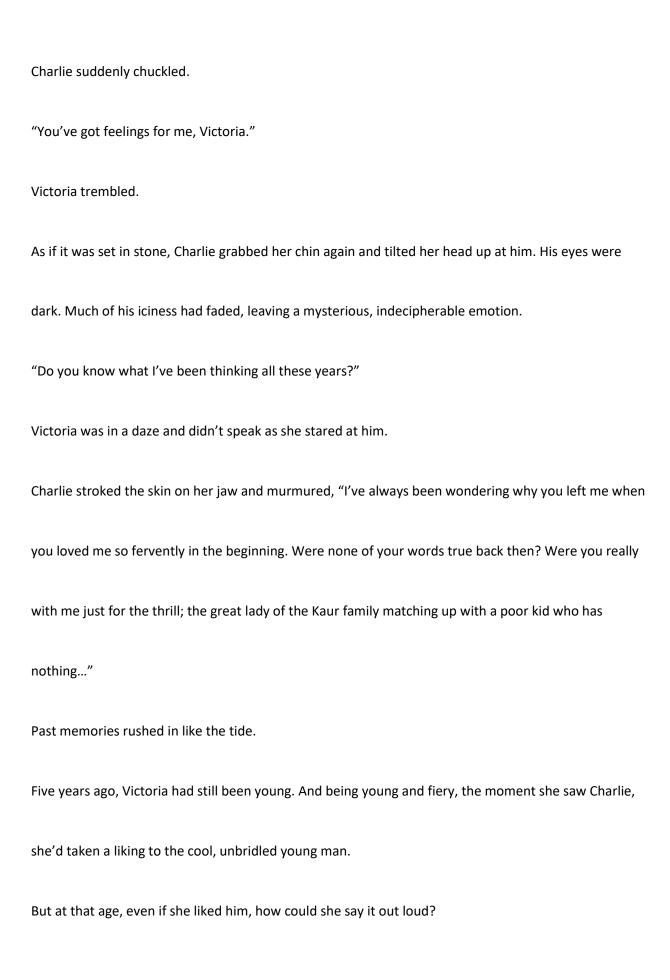
gone along with her whims?

But him, only him, had caused her nothing but trouble the moment he appeared. And she'd given her

heart to him, only him, even bearing her a son out of wedlock.







The more she liked him, the more conflicted she grew, and the more twisted it got.

She loved him to death inside, but simply had to act like she didn't care.

After all, she was the grand lady of the Kaur family.

All the friends around her, all the people by her side, were the upper crust of Julio.

Even Natalia had been the star of the Dawson family before Kiera's incident.

Rich people compared each other often in their circles. One day, when someone asked her if she really

was getting together with an impoverished peasant brat and started mocking her.

For some reason, she'd blurted out that she was just having some fun with her, so what was so

shocking about that!

Her opponent provoked her, saying that she'd only marry some brat from a farming village and become

his housewife for the rest of her life. She'd panicked and said she'd never marry some country

bumpkin. She was a Kaur lady, and their relationship now was just for the thrill of it. How could that

peasant boy ever be a match for her?

She hadn't meant it that way.

She just wanted to say that the young man she'd acknowledged wasn't an impoverished peasant brat. He had brains. He had guts. He had spirit. He was a shining jewel, no comparison to those truly roughshod country rubes. So she believed that one day, he'd prove that he was a match for her with his own ability. But she'd never had a chance to explain it all. Charlie had been standing at the end of the alley, having heard all the arrogance she'd displayed in the heat of the moment. Up until today, Victoria had never forgotten how cold and shadowy his eyes had looked. As if, in that single instant, he'd pushed her far away. The two had been so close, only a few paces away, but that distance was an eternity, impossible to breach. The next day, Charlie had vanished. At only a week before their final exams, he'd left, not even leaving a single word behind for her. Victoria had been angry then. She'd hated him. After all, she'd been pampered all through her life. Everyone had treated her as the apple of their eye.

But this man was leaving her just after a few words, without even saying anything. How could he?

Back then, he'd searched for him frantically, calling him, even sneaking to his old home to look for him. But she'd turned up with nothing. Then, by chance, she'd heard the girls she'd been arguing with before gossip that someone had seen Charlie outside the country. Seems like he was with a woman too. She didn't believe it. When the exams were over, she ignored her father's opposition and chased out of the country. It was a car race. His brow was still cool, but it ran with energy. His driving with swift and steady, taking the top spot without question. He'd opened the door, gotten out, and embraced a girl close by. A happy, contented smile blossomed on his face, stabbing into her eyes like blades. How stupid of her! The regret, panic, worry, longing and conflict she didn't want to admit and thought was love might as

well have been an insignificant shower in the eyes of someone else.

There she'd been on one side of the ocean imagining how painful it must have been to hear those

words. But here he was, coming into his own, a beauty in his arms, not once taking her words to heart, not once feeling sad over her.

She didn't show herself and slunk back, thoroughly disappointed.

As time passed, she'd buried that romance deep inside, never once displaying it, never once letting anyone know.

Victoria's thoughts drifted far. As time flowed ever onwards, it burst up against the current. For an instant, looking into the man's eyes before her, she saw the youth of the past.

Charlie was still speaking.

His voice was low and hoarse.

"I'd given up on you once. I thought that with time and distance, I could chance everything, including my infatuation and love for you. And I did it. For four years, I seemed to really forget you. I could date, flirt with, and even bed other women. But why is it that when it came to crossing that final line, you would always appear before me? Did you put a curse on me? Such that I'd never love another woman, even feel repulsed from simple bodily contact? For a while, I even wondered if I was a normal goddamn man. But now, with you appearing again, it proves that I am. You know it better than anyone, Victoria.

There's a voice deep inside me that rejects every other woman outside because it still hasn't let you go. It hasn't forgotten you. It belongs to you. Will you still have it now? Could you forget the rights and wrongs of the past and accept it again; love it again?" Chapter 335 Getting Signed In Victoria burst into tears. Like beads on a severed rosary, they rolled down. Something was crushing her heart. Something sour and swollen. An indescribable feeling welled up, shaking her to her core. Charlie sighed and wrapped her in his arms. Victoria sobbed even harder. She grabbed his clothes and buried her face in his chest, weeping like a child. Five years. Four years of being apart, a single night of madness one year ago, and then giving birth to Joy on her own. The emotions, the grudges, the sins between the two of them had almost exhausted her completely. She'd wanted to give up. She'd wanted to take the child and run, to have a calm, peaceful life, free of

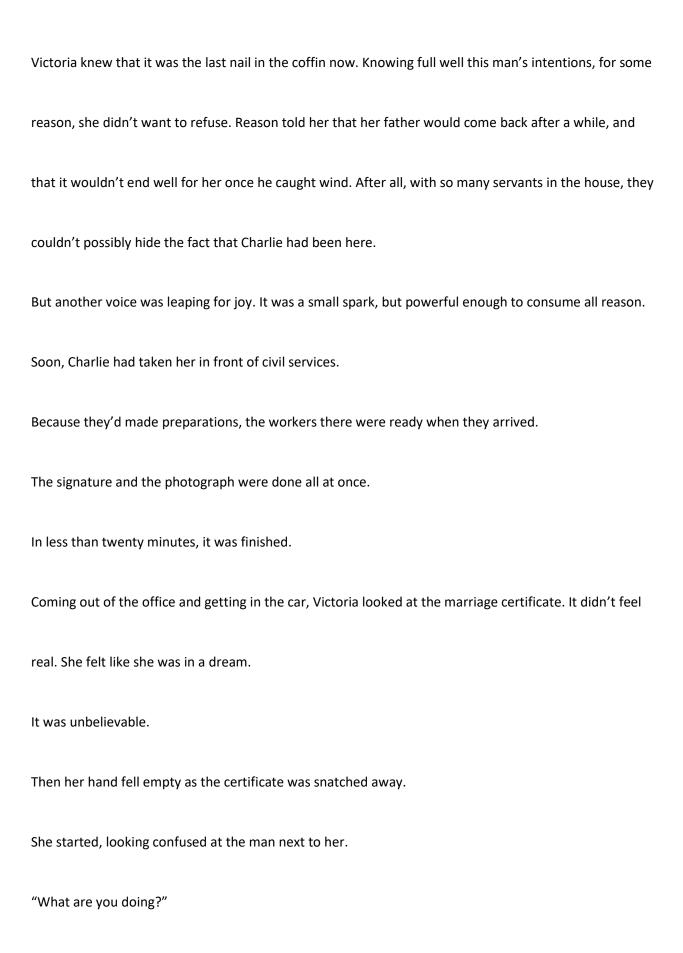
the grips of something as hurtful as love.
For that, she'd even given up on her identity as a lady of the Kaur family. Given up on her father and
her pampering.
But at a time like this, he was coming and saying something like this to her. Asking something like this
of her.
Was he doing it on purpose?
Did he just not want her to be happy, coming here with the stick and the carrot so she wouldn't give up
on hope entirely, leading her on like a fish on the hook.
By what right?
Just because she still liked him a little bit?
The more she cried, the more the agony dug at her. Whimpering, she balled up her fists and hammered
at him.
Charlie didn't resist. He stood there, allowing her to let it all out on his unmoving frame.
After a while, Victoria grew tired, and her tears stopped.
She'd been about to get out from his arms, but the man pressed a hand against the back of her head

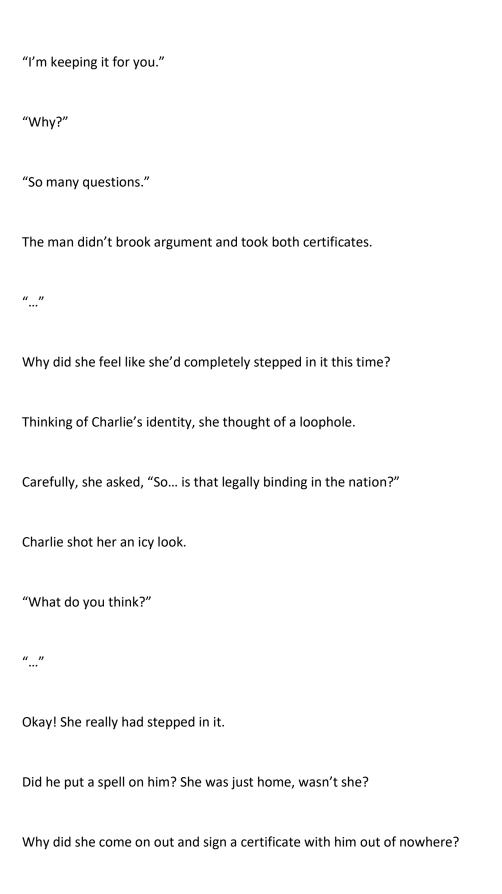


window and get married. Everything will solve itself when we do, okay?"



She clenched her fists, feeling her nails dig into her palm, the pain reaching her heart.
Charlie's eyes cooled completely as he looked at her with a shadowed gaze.
"But I'm not the Charlie Peck of five years ago now. I won't let you leave again. You're getting married
with me no matter what, got it?"
Victoria opened her mouth, about to say something, then gave up.
Charlie patted her cheeks, satisfied. His voice was soft. "I'll love you, Victoria. Just like how you loved
me in the beginning."
" "
After a few minutes, Charlie's phone rang. It was his assistant.
"Everything's ready, sir."
"All right. I'm coming down."
With that, he took Victoria with him out the door.
The servants didn't know Charlie and only thought it was strange that he was taking Victoria with him
out.





Victoria wanted to crawl in a hole and die. Probably because of her complicated emotions, the trip back seemed to go quicker. Soon, they were back at the Kaur family mansion. Victoria opened the door and was about to get out when Charlie stopped her. A while later, the assistant walked over with some luggage. "I've got it, sir." Charlie nodded and had him put the things in the trunk, then drove off out. Victoria's eyes widened, her expression changing. "What are you doing, Charlie Peck? Why did you take my luggage?" As Charlie drove, he smirked. "We're married now, so shouldn't you call me something else?" Victoria choked. Chapter 336 Husband and Wife The man tilted his head to look at her. Under his gaze, Victoria couldn't hold it in and complained, "That proposal wasn't romantic at all, and there was no wedding, so I won't admit it. Quit dreaming." Charlie shrugged nonchalantly. "That's all right. If the law admits it, it's fine."

""
Soon, the car arrived at the airport.
Looking at the tickets that the man had already prepared, Charlie hesitated.
Thinking of the reaction Brandon would have after catching wind of all this, she followed him onto the
plane.
She knew that there was no going back after some choices.
Even though she was saying she didn't admit it, she must have, somewhere deep inside her, accepted
it all.
Accepted the willingness and authenticity in that certificate, and the true voice buried in her heart.
It was four in the afternoon by the time they arrived in Eqitin.
Victoria's phone had been off on the plane, so she hadn't received any calls.
But the moment she stepped out of the plane, her phone started ringing nonstop.

Some calls were from Brandon, while others were from James.

She hesitated and didn't take her father's calls, instead taking her brother's.

The moment they connected, she could hear James' outraged voice.

"Victoria! Have you lost your mind? You know full well that Dad doesn't agree with what's between you two, and you still brought that man to the house? Where are you right now? Get back here this instant!"

Victoria sat on the car, head bent, expressionlessly poking a hole in her ragged jeans with her finger.

"We've gotten married."

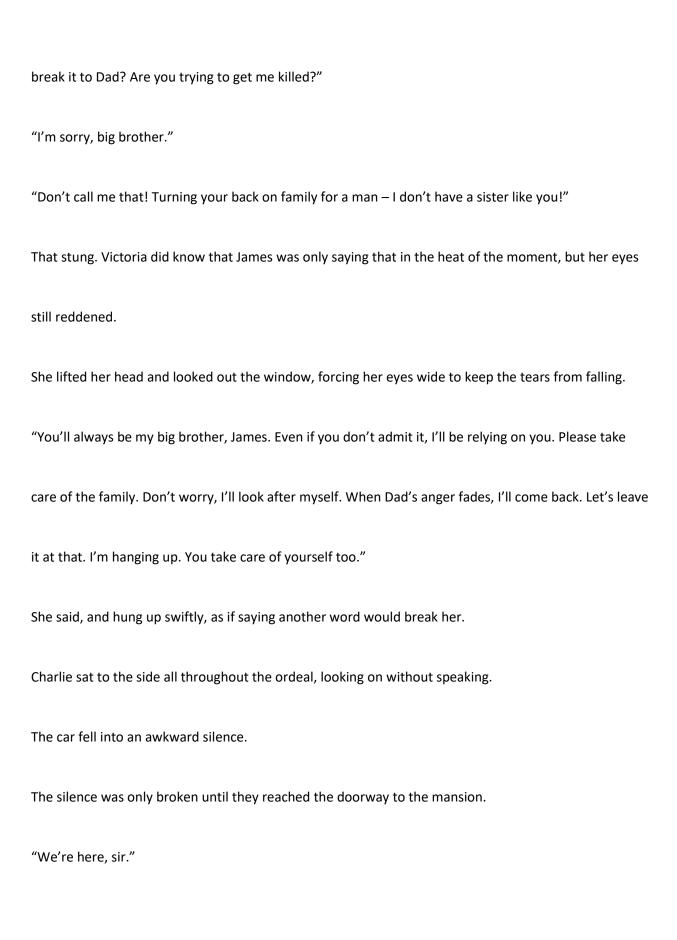
"What do you mean married? Stop beating around the... what did you just say? You..."

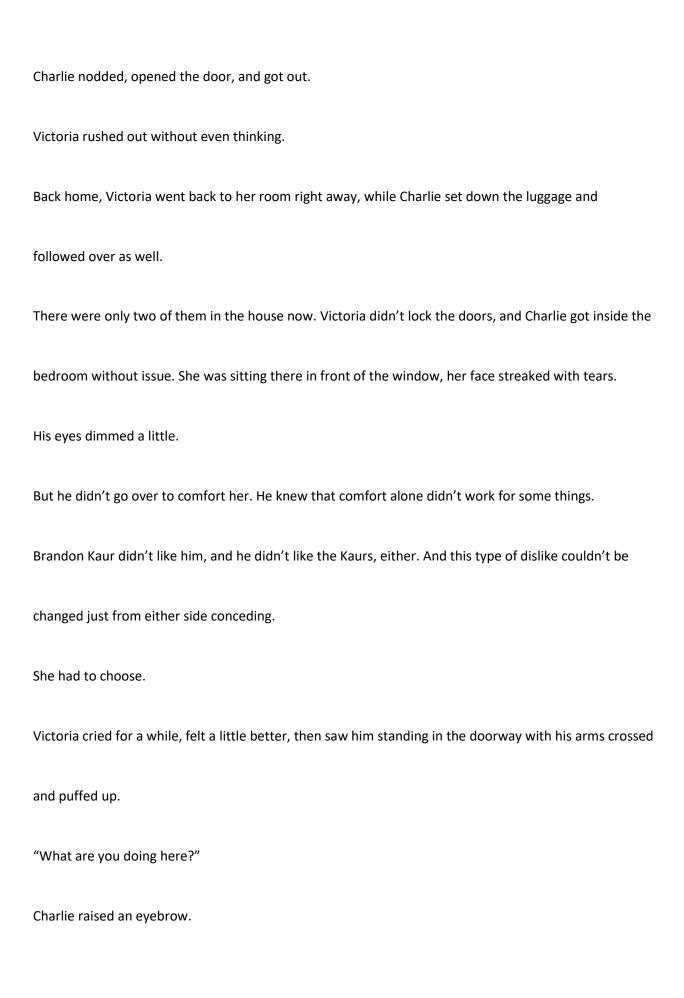
James' reaction was delayed, and he went quiet for a few seconds. Victoria didn't need to look to tell that he was probably blowing his top. She choked on her words for a moment, then blurted, "James, I'm all sorts of frazzled right now and I don't want to argue with Dad right now. Smooth things over with him for me, please. After a while, when he's calmed down and digested the news completely, I'll bring Charlie with me back and talk with him face-to-face."

James was so enraged that he started laughing. "You're really trying to strike out now, are you, Victoria!

Smooth things over for you? How the fuck am I supposed to smooth this over? Did you even think

about me now that you're trying to ask forgiveness before permission? I fucking stole that contract for you only for you to turn around and get married to that Peck boy, so now how the hell am I supposed to







She retracted her hand, eyes darting to the side, not daring to look him in the eye. Her tongue, though, was just as unforgiving as always. "Please, who'd live together with you, anyway!" Charlie didn't split hairs and only chuckled. "Husband and wife are one. You should understand something that simple." She was struck speechless for a moment. Seeing her defeated look, Charlie laughed. He leant over close and teasingly pinched her face, murmuring, "Now call me darling." Victoria glared at him ferociously. "Don't even think about it!" With that, she ignored him and turned around towards the bed. The man wasn't angry at the cold shoulder, instead chuckling lowly. After a full day of running around, he was tired, too, and didn't want to tangle with her verbally. He took his clothes and went to shower. A while back, Charlie had come and gone a few times before, so there were his clothes here.

Victoria laid exhausted on the bed, gritting her teeth. She shouldn't have been as weak as to soften at a critical moment and accept his request. Now she was stuck between a rock and a hard place. Thinking of everything that had happened, she suddenly found herself dazed. Were they really married? Why didn't it feel real at all? She pinched her own arm. It hurt. This was real. She sighed, grabbed a nearby pillow, and covered her eyes with it. After a while, the bathroom door creaked and a certain someone emerged. She took the pillow off right away and turned to look at the man fresh out the shower. He wasn't wearing a shirt and only had a white towel around her, revealing a large swath of honeycolored muscle. The lines across his body were firm and beautiful, each piece seemingly carved by the gods, sensual but not exaggerated.

For some reason, even though she'd seen that body more than once, every time she laid eyes on it,

she couldn't help but blush. Chapter 337 Sleep with Him Awhile Getting a good look at her reaction, Charlie's eyes crinkled with pleasure. "Like what you see, Mrs. Peck?" He asked, lifting his arm and toweling pearls of water off his hair. Bright red, Victoria cleared her throat awkwardly and bit her lip, lying through her teeth, "Nobody's looking at you! Shameless bastard!" With that, she turned around and faced the other way, ignoring him deliberately. The way she meant an entirely different thing to what she said really revealed a lot about what she felt. Charlie's mood suddenly improved, and the pressure that had come along with him faded by quite a bit. He dried his hair, then took the towel off and clambered into bed. Victoria was still confused when she suddenly felt a ball of heat approach. She panicked, sat up, and looked at the man as he spread the blankets and clambered in. Victoria shrieked, "What are you doing?" Charlie raised his eyebrows innocently. "Sleeping." Victoria glared at him. "Don't you have your own room? Can't you go back there if you want to sleep?"

Charlie shook his head helplessly, explaining with utmost patience, "We weren't married before so we
slept separately. But we're legally husband and wife now. What husband and wife would sleep
separately?"
<i>u_n</i>
She knew it!
Huffing, she tugged the sheets inwards and growled, "Well, you can't sleep now, either. It's broad
daylight, so what are you sleeping for?"
Charlie chortled. "Then why are you allowed to sleep?"
"I I'm in a bad mood and I'm not feeling well, okay?"
Charlie squinted.
Then he reached over.
"Where aren't you feeling well? Show me."
Victoria stiffened. That had only been an excuse, she wasn't really feeling ill.
Seeing that man reach over, she couldn't hide it and sat up.

"Fine, fine. I'm not ill, I'm not sleepy, either. If you want to sleep that badly, then go right ahead. I'm
going out."
With that, she threw off the sheets and got up.
Unexpectedly, just one second later, her entire body was picked up and a warmth surrounded her.
She'd already been stuffed inside the blankets and the man had come lying in swiftly, wrapping her in
his embrace.
Victoria, outraged, snarled, "Charlie Peck!"
Charlie shushed her and soothed, "Don't fuss. Lie down with me for a bit. I promise I won't do
anything."
Victoria wanted to struggle, but with the man's arms clamped around her like a vice, what could she
do?
She was fuming and turned around to glare at him.
But the moment she turned her head, she came face to face with the tired bags under his eyes. With
them closed, the bruised, puffed up skin was so obvious even though she hadn't noticed.
Maybe because he really was tired. The moment he got in bed, his tightly strung nerves relaxed.

Combined with the faint, familiar fragrance in his arms, his entire body loosened, and the fatigue he'd been hiding revealed itself entirely.

Victoria paused, the snaps that had already come up to her throat deflating like a punctured football.

She didn't know where he'd been and what he'd been doing these past two days to end up this tired.

Couldn't have been anything fun.

She suddenly felt a bit of pity as she murmured, "Let go of me for a bit!"

Then she tried to struggle again. This time, Charlie didn't force it and loosened his grip a bit. Only a bit,

though, to get her more comfortable. She still couldn't run away.

Victoria tried several times to no avail and gave up.

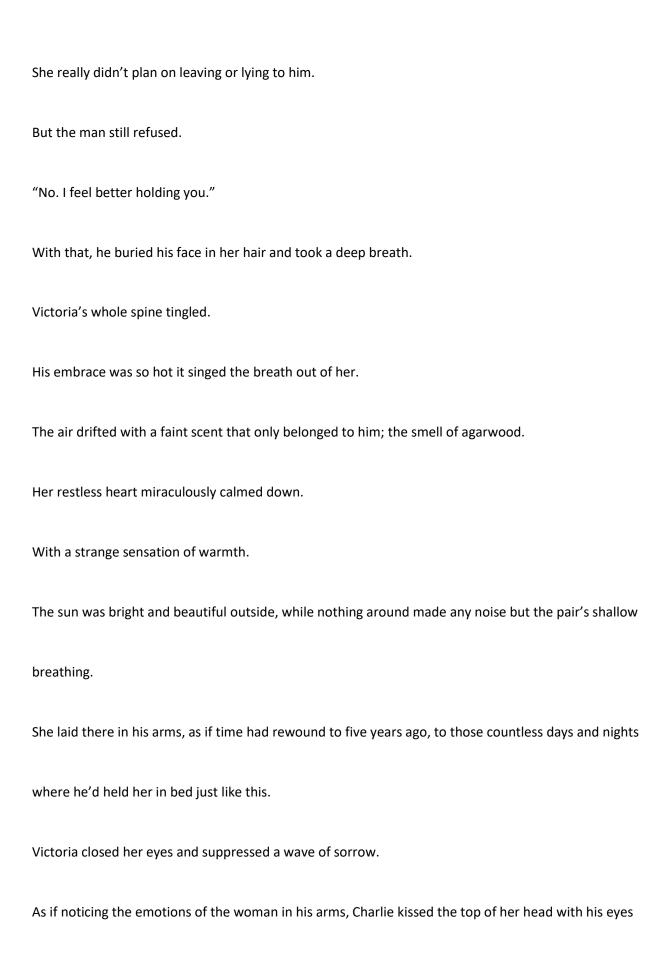
Forget it!

This wasn't the first time, anyway. If he wanted to hold her, he could hold her. It wasn't going to kill her.

With that in her mind, Victoria didn't struggle any longer. She went quiet for a while and said, "It's not

comfortable if you sleep like this. If you're really tired, sleep properly. I'll keep you company beside you

without leaving."





Then she heard the man's low, sighing voice.
"Don't ever leave me again, Victoria."
Her eyes stung and she buried her slender face in the pillows, tears of either joy or sorrow leaking out
without a noise.

It was only the day after that Natalia caught wind that Victoria was together with Charlie and had
registered as a married couple.
It was the morning then, and Charlie and Victoria had gone to her doorstep to pick Joy up. Seeing them
together, Natalia had been surprised, but then Victoria had explained their relationship.
Because they were good friends, Natalia had already known that Victoria had always liked Charlie,
even chased after him for years.
So she was naturally happy for the two of them now that they had ended up together.
But before her happiness could fade, she'd heard that Joy was actually Charlie's son, and the man
who'd gotten Victoria pregnant and started the whole fiasco with her family was also Charlie!
Natalia was not okay with that.

Chapter 338 It Really Is You

After all, she knew how much Victoria had suffered this year.

She'd also cursed whoever had done this countless times - whichever heartless man had put her

Victoria through this, not taking responsibility or even showing up for the child.

Natalia's face sank right away and her expression wasn't pretty.

She knew that there was probably some inside situation to get the two to tangle around like this, but

she still couldn't resist a few snarky comments.

Charlie didn't mind. He knew that Natalia had a good relationship with Victoria, so he didn't take those

little things seriously.

After picking Joy up, Charlie brought Victoria home.

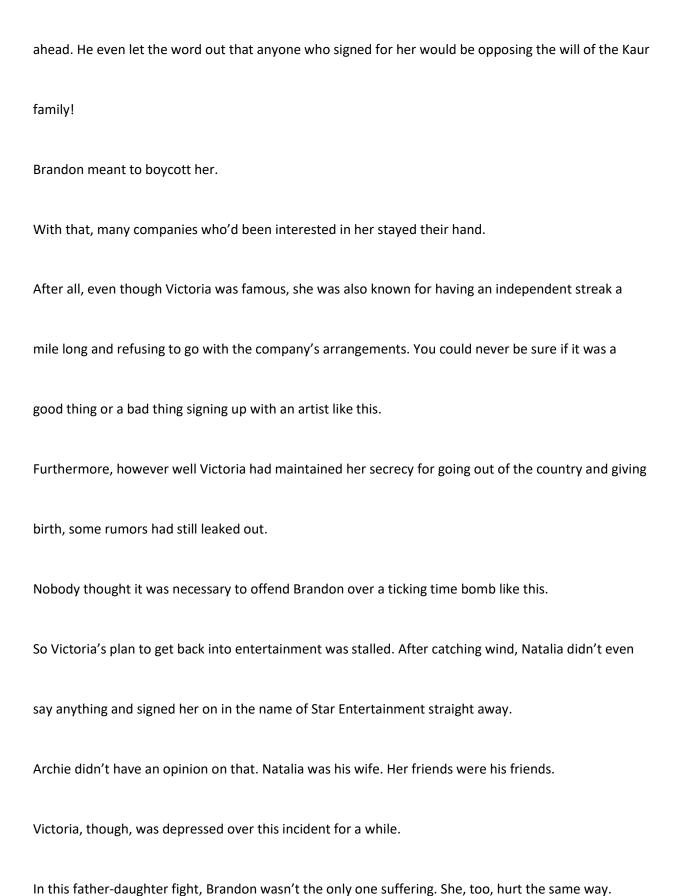
It didn't sit completely with Natalia that Victoria was just being with him like this, but it was their private

affairs, so she didn't butt in too much.

Thankfully, Victoria had gotten her contract back and she was ready to return to work after a few

months. With James' help, the original contract under the Kaurs' company could be thrown out. But

Brandon was still angry, especially after knowing that she'd gone and married Charlie without his go-



If there had been a third option, none of them had wanted to let it go this far.

Natalia couldn't be of any assistance there, so she could only sigh helplessly.

Today, she'd just so happened to have invited Hamlin and another investor for lunch. Hamlin had a new

film that he wanted her to star in, and was about to communicate to her early on about the role.

Natalia and Hamlin were old acquaintances, and because the investor knew Archie, he was polite to

her too.

The meal went well, and so did the discussion.

Natalia had promised to go watch a serial cartoon with Anne, so she didn't linger after the meal. She

said her platitudes with Hamlin and the others and left first.

In the carpark, she was getting ready to head to her car when the sound of an argument came around

the corner.

Her car was parked only a short distance away from the corner, less than ten meters. Because there

was a concrete pillar in the way, they couldn't see her there, and vice versa.

Only, the voice was a little familiar, so she stopped, curious.

It was a woman and a man arguing.

The woman was saying, "Who do you think you are? Even if I'm pregnant, it's got nothing to do with you! If you know what's good for you, scram! If someone snaps a picture of this, I won't let you off easy!"

The man sounded pitiful, his tones pleading.

"I know I've done wrong, but for the sake of the child, can't you forgive me just this once? You don't want the baby to be born without a father, do you?"

"Ha! Born? Aren't you thinking too much, Maxwell? When did I say I was going to give birth to them?

And you think you've got the right to be the child's father? Dream on! A worm who doesn't even know where his future leads has no right to be my baby's father!"

"Selena! How could you say that?"

"I'm speaking the truth! I don't like you at all, Maxwell Cohen, so please face reality! That night was only an accident, so can't you treat it as such? Just go about your business as if nothing's happened, and stay out of my way!"

"I know I'm good for nothing, Selena, and my career is ruined even after finally getting a good start. But

my feelings are true. Trust me, I'll definitely work hard to show you good results, and I won't have you
suffer in my wake"
"Enough!"
Selena barked. Seemed like Maxwell had grabbed her hand and she had wrenched it free, backing off
by a step and walking outside the angle of the concrete pillar.
Seeing her, Natalia ducked into her car.
The car windows had been specially treated and appeared black. The outside was visible from the
within, but one couldn't see inside from without at all.
The car door made a slight slam as it closed. Selena paused and looked over, her expression
darkening.
Natalia didn't say a word and treated it like nothing had happened as she started the car.
The car backed up smoothly and rolled outwards.
Seeing the license plate number, Selena's face changed. Maxwell had wanted to tug at her and say
something else, but she flung him off again.

"I'm warning you, Maxwell! Not a word about this to anyone, or I really will kill you!" "Selena..." "And! This child is only a byproduct of an accident. I won't keep them, and you don't get to play the father, so stop dreaming. We don't live in the same world. If you tangle on like this, it won't end will for either of us. If you'll just let go, I'll pay you enough to get away from here and start a new life. Money, or continuing to spiral down like this – it's your choice! Think it through, then give me a call. That's that." With that, Selena got in her car, slammed the door shut, and sped out. Looking at the taillights in the distance, Maxwell clenched his fists, eyes going bloodred. Natalia didn't make it out too far when a red Ferrari forced her to a stop. A minute later, a knock came on her car window. She rolled it down and saw Selena's delicate features. "It really is you?" Selena's expression wasn't pretty. A little exasperated, Natalia raised her hand and greeted her. "Hey! Long time no see, Miss Kawn." Compared to her upbeat tones, Selena's face was practically a storm cloud. She looked around, then muttered, "Are you free to let me in to talk, Mrs. McCarthy?"











"I don't know the details. Seems like the old master of the Kawn family can't hold on anymore. Our old man gave sir a call and had him go over to take a look." Natalia's heart jolted. Wilhelm Kawn wasn't in the best of health, but he hadn't gotten worse in this time. Why had he suddenly taken a turn for the worse? The four families had a delicate relationship right now, but the two old men of the Kawn and McCarthy families were friends of several decades. Conflicting interests between their families were one thing, but their personal relationship was another. If Wilhelm really wasn't doing well, it was reasonable for William to take Archie over to visit. Natalia thought about it and said, "I've got it. If there's nothing else, get back early and rest." Mrs. Dottie nodded and left. Natalia went back to her room, washed, and not long later, Archie returned. It was early in the year and still cold up north in Eqitin. The night air seemed permeated with thin frost. Natalia heard the engine of the car and knew the man was back. She got out and went downstairs, feeling him bring the cold in with him even from a distance as she shivered.

Archie paused and went back in, closing the door. Looking at the thin pajamas she had on, he frowned. "Why are you dressed so lightly?" Natalia rubbed her arms as she took his coat. "How much am I supposed to wear at home, anyway? How did it go? Is old man Kawn all right?" Speaking of that, Archie's face fell slightly. "They got him back, but it looks like he won't last much longer." Natalia stared for a moment. With the Kawn family's status, the doctors they had access to were the peak medical teams in the entire world. If even they were saying it was done, it really was done. She didn't know Wilhelm too well and didn't have too many ties to the Kawn family, but she still felt a twinge of regret at the news. She didn't stay down for long, though. Recovering, she said, "There's hot soup in the kitchen. Mrs.

Archie nodded.

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Dottie kept it warm just for you. I'll go get you some."

Natalia brought the soup over. It was Mrs. Dottie's special recipe. She'd busted it out because Natalia







Kawn's share. With her gone, those shares would naturally pass to her child. It's a pity that Wilhelm
always thought this was a blood granddaughter when it turns out to be a fake. He's still alive and still
gets his say over what to do with the share, but who knows with whom those shares would end up
when he's gone. A fight will probably break out by that point. In summary, the Kawn family is a mess,
and it might not be a good thing for the Bissels to get involved."
Natalia nodded, agreeing.
The two chatted a while longer until the night dragged on and they went back to their rooms to rest.
Meanwhile, the Kawn household.
With Wilhelm having just been recovered from the edge of death, the family heaved a collective sigh of
relief.
After an intensive checkup by the doctors proved that the old man was really no longer in immediate
danger, they relaxed.
Having endured through the night, everyone was tired. After seeing to the old man, they went back to

rest.



Jessica heard it and showed a helpless look in her eyes. "I... I just want to stay with you, Grandpa." Old man Kawn laughed. "What would you stay with me for? Forget how much longer I can hold on for, but if I'm not longer around, you need to have your own life." Hearing that, Jessica teared up again. Wilhelm held off on the topic immediately while sighing internally. This child was far too kind. Heaven only knew what she'd suffered to end up so sensitive. He sighed and changed the subject. "How do you feel about the young master of the Bissel family who came over tonight, Jessica?" Jessica started. She looked at him with watery eyes, not quite taking his meaning. Wilhelm squinted and smiled kindly. "The Bissels are a top family of Eqitin. Like us Kawns, they're about a century old. When the old man of the Bissels were still alive, he was great friends with me. Besides, that Ontario lad has a good personality. Sunny, honest, not like those playboys out there. If

you were to be with him, he should take good care of you. I can rest easy too. What do you think?"
Jessica blushed, lowering her head as if she wanted to bury her head into the ground.
"I-I don't know."
The old man burst out laughing.
"Don't be shy. Men and women all get married when they grow up. It's all quite normal, no!"
Jessica forced a smile.
"Grandpa, I don't want to marry anyone right now."
Wilhelm froze, frowning.
"What is it? Do you not like him? Or do you like someone else?"
Jessica hurriedly shook her hand. "No, no, I-I…"
She bit her lip, looking as if it was tremendously difficult for her to say. Her eyes reddened, her entire
being emanating vulnerability, making onlookers want to protect her at first glance.
Wilhelm couldn't take it and urged, "Do you have some other worries?"