

Married in a Flash Embarking on the Journey to Wealth

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The taxi stopped at the parking lot near the police station. As Aurelia got out of the car, she noticed Leslie was staring at his phone.

She then recalled that he was supposed to be at his office. After signing such a big contract, everyone at the office must be desperate to celebrate with him.

Yet, he had been running around with her.

“Mr. Synder, you haven’t finished your work, have you? Why don’t you get back to work? I can go home by myself,” Aurelia said.

“I’ll send you home first,” insisted Leslie.

Aurelia thought about it and relented. “Alright.”

She glanced at her heels, feeling exhausted from walking around all day.

Upon arriving home, Aurelia went straight for her room but Leslie stopped her. “Aurelia.”

“What’s wrong? I am going in the right direction,” she said.

“Your suitcase.” Leslie pointed at the suitcase in the dining room.

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She blushed and glanced at the torn divorce agreement, not daring to meet his eyes.

As she grabbed the suitcase, Leslie walked over to stand in her path.

“So, are you not divorcing me?” Leslie asked.

“Huh? If you want to, we can still...” She could sense his piercing glare and instantly changed her mind. “Let’s... not. I’m confident that I can win. Besides, Ms. Linda would be sad if we get a divorce now.”

“Fine,” Leslie said.

Aurelia fell into silence as she wondered about what kind of tone Leslie was using with

her. She looked at Leslie and could only smile.

“You don’t have to wait for me tonight,” he said.

Aurelia nodded and watched Leslie leave.

She dragged her suitcase into the bedroom. As she put her clothes back into the wardrobe, she paused.

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Why did Leslie suddenly change his mind about divorce?

She looked at her hand, where the warmth of Leslie’s palm still lingered. Sensing her thoughts wandering, she quickly focused on organizing her clothes.

All the while, her phone on the bed kept vibrating.

Why were people so fond of meddling in others’ affairs?

Suddenly, her phone rang again.

Was it another nuisance call?

Looking at the number, she hesitated before answering.

“Hi, Aurelia,” a man said.

“You are...

“She hesitated as the voice sounded familiar.

“Leon Synder,” he informed.

“Do you need something from me?” Aurelia asked in confusion.

“I know about your situation. I believe in you,” Leon said.

Aurelia was confused. Leon hadn't spoken to her with this tone before, so it baffled her as to why he had suddenly become so gentlemanly.

“Aurelia, I can help you,” Leon spoke again.

“You want to help me? How?” Aurelia asked curiously.

“I can pay the compensation for you.” Leon smiled.

“You want to pay 50 million for me?” Aurelia asked incredulously.

“Yes, you don't have to worry about anything. I just think a woman like you shouldn't suffer with a man like Leslie. You deserve better.” Leslie's words dripped with a sense of

superiority.

“What do you mean?” Aurelia asked.

“I think you're a smart woman. You should understand my proposal. Life is short. Why waste your youth with a programmer? He may be in the news today, but he could be worthless tomorrow. He provides no sense of security at all,” Leon said.

“So?” Aurelia didn't understand what Leon was trying to imply.

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Leon offered, “So... I hope you'll be mine. I heard you've been fired from the company. So far, there's no company in Seacester willing to hire you. Synder Corporation can take you in, though. Aurelia, I hope you'll consider it. After all, it's 50 million.”

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Leon's words were subtle and his tone made it sound like he was just discussing business. However, he was clearly putting a price tag on Aurelia's worth.

Aurelia fell silent. She was stunned when she heard Leon mention 50 million, **so** she completely failed to notice that the door behind her was pushed open halfway. Leslie was standing just outside.

Remembering that Aurelia hadn't eaten dinner, Leslie had gone downstairs to buy some. He brought it back before returning to the office.

He didn't expect Leon to contact Aurelia within such a short time when he was gone.

He quietly watched her absent-minded expression darkly, his face devoid of expression.

Indeed, Leon had the power to effortlessly solve all of Aurelia's problems with a single

command.

It would have been natural for Aurelia to accept Leon's proposal, considering that an ordinary person couldn't earn 50 million in their lifetime.

He clenched his fists until his knuckles turned white as he restrained herself.

Just **then**, Aurelia's response came from the room. "Mr. Synder, I am married. I will not betray my husband. You say you believe in me, but you are tacitly hinting that I should pay 50 million.

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"What's the difference between you and those people online? You want to buy my life for **50** million, yet you have never truly understood me for even a second. Don't compare yourself to my husband. He's much better than you."

She continued to berate him, "He never once doubted me from the very start. He respects me and helps me solve problems. He would never measure someone's worth with money.

"I don't know how rich people think, and I'm not interested in knowing. In any case, I don't need your help. I am innocent."

Leon chuckled menacingly. “Aurelia, even if what you say is true, who would believe you?”

“Some people do,” Aurelia said firmly.

“Leslie? **So** what if he believes you? Is he rich or powerful? He can’t even stand up against

Exa. What qualifications does he have in be compared to ine? You’re truly *naive*. The rules of this world are never written by people like you. My offer of help is the greatest gift you

“Thank you for you in ‘Why don’t you see if there’s anyone else in need of it? I don’t need it. My husband and I are doing just fine,” she said calmly.

“Pine, Aurelia. I’m curious to see how your lovely husband will save you on Friday,”

“Why does he have to save me? I’ve been solving my own problems long before I got married. It’s not like I’m his child or anything,” Aurelia said bluntly.

Leon hung up the phone in frustration.

Leslie, who was outside the door, came close to chuckling. He closed the door and set the food on the table.

Aurelia was truly something. She did not need to worry, because not a single person who bullied her would get away with it.

As Leslie stepped out of the door, he felt as though he had a boost of energy and didn’t feel tired at all.

He stepped hard on the accelerator and arrived at the office in no time.

As soon as he arrived, Daniel approached him. “Mr. Synder, what happened? You ran two red lights.”

“Did I? I didn’t realize,” Leslie said casually.

“Huh?” Daniel had never seen such a **casual** side of him and said, “I summoned the people you wanted to see.”

Leslie nodded. "Alright." He stepped into the office and noticed that his most skilled subordinates had gathered.

"Mr. Synder, it's quite late. Is there something urgent that you need?" his staff asked.

"I've sent videos and photos to your emails. I need you to recover them **and** trace the IP address," Leslie said.

"That's it?" the staff asked with confusion.

"There are a lot of them," Leslie said and opened the email.

The others looked at the shocking videos and photos, stunned by the familiar face on

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them.

Leslie narrowed his eyes in displeasure. "Don't stare. They are all fake."

"Of course." The others desperately wished they could keep their eyes shut forever, fearing that Leslie would gouge their eyes out for looking.

Daniel approached him and said, "Mr. Synder, I found the owner of the necklace. **You** wouldn't believe who it is."

"Who?" Leslie asked with curiosity.

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Daniel looked at Leslie and smiled, so Leslie knew it was someone he knew.

Immediately, Daniel whispered something in his ear.

"Got it." Leslie nodded and stood up. "You keep an eye on things here. I'll be back in a bit."

"Alright, Mr. Synder," Daniel said.

An old Volkswagen slowly pulled into a vast estate. Two rows of trees wound their way up, and leaves curled up on the road, while antique short lamps served as

non

embellishments along the path.

After the car stopped, the family's driver stepped forward to open the door and took the keys from Leslie.

"Just a quick wipe. I'll be leaving later," Leslie informed.

"Yes, sir," the driver said.

With that, Leslie strolled into the house.

The mansion was in the style of the Synder family's forest garden, and through the waterside corridor was the reception room.

Leslie turned into the adjacent room, where Linda sat in a grand armchair, bringing tea.

She was not at all surprised to see him.

"You rarely come home, yet you came today without needing an invitation. Have a seat." The tea brewed emitted a refreshing aroma, and Linda poured a cup for Leslie.

Taking a leisurely sip, Leslie glanced out the French window at the bamboo forest.

Linda glanced at him and smiled. "You're rarely so absent-minded. Is it the rumors about Aurelia online?"

"No," Leslie said blandly.

Linda considered his word for a moment and immediately guessed what was on his mind. "You will eventually get in trouble when you keep looking for one. Lies can become a burden if said too often. Lies are the worst things to exist in a marriage."

“It’s not time yet,” Leslie said.

Linda asked, “When will it be time then? When you’ve avenged your grievances? You’ve always had a goal, and every step has to be planned toward that goal

“You can’t even be bothered to stop for a second. Life shouldn’t be like that. Life has its ups and downs, surprises, and many exciting things. You can’t ignore everything else just because **of** your goals.”

Linda insisted on Leslie getting married precisely for this reason.

Her son had turned into the robot he was studying at some point. He was devoid of expression, emotion, or **life**. She felt guilty that her stubbornness and failed marriage caused her young son to suffer great upheavals.

Over the years, she had been trying to change Leslie, but all her efforts had failed.

Until one day, she met Aurelia.

At first glance, Aurelia seemed ordinary, but Linda saw much potential in her. She was vibrant and uplifting. This was exactly what Leslie lacked.

In fact, Linda had considered letting them get to know each other before discussing marriage. However, given Leslie’s state, she was sure that this approach would never

work.

Leslie’s world was sealed and if she didn’t pry open a gap, he would have never met with

Aurelia.

Though she was the one who demanded this marriage, she could see how much Leslie had changed.

Leslie wanted to argue, but ended up just sipping on his tea. “Maybe another time.

Linda was overjoyed. She knew what Aurelia was capable of, or she wouldn’t have felt so connected to Aurelia the first time they met.

They were destined to **be** a family.

“Those two brats are upstairs. Go ahead and talk to them. Do you need my help?” Linda

asked.

“It’s fine. She can handle it herself,” Leslie said.

“Alright. I’m glad you’ve learned to protect your wife.” Linda smiled.

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Leslie didn’t acknowledge or deny what she said. Setting the **cup** down, he got up and

strode out.

Linda sipped on her tea happily and wondered when she would have grandchildren.

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The “brats” Linda spoke of were actually Leslie’s cousins, the twin sons of Leslie’s uncle. They were the ones Leslie had sent to Aurelia’s company to handle the plagiarism incident.

At this moment, the two of them were also the owners of the 50 million dollar necklace.

Leslie climbed the winding stairs. A few moments later, cries and pleas echoed from the

room.

“Leslie, we were wrong. We really didn’t know Eva borrowed the necklace to frame Aurelia,” pleaded the older brother, Nathan.

“Since we’ve helped Aurelia before, please forgive us,” chimed in Nick, the younger

brother.

Leaning against the window, Leslie lit a cigarette. His gaze was cold, and he was clearly not satisfied with their pleas.

Though young, they were eventually going to inherit their dad's company. If they were so careless now, how would they handle things in the future?

Nathan continued, "This necklace was bought at auction for our mother. But she didn't like it, so it's been sitting in the bank vault for two or three years. Eva must have seen it at the auction house and wanted to borrow it to increase her magazine's publicity, and we just..."

"Her parents are regional CEOs, and they've had some dealings with our dad. We thought

could be mutual benefits and good relations in the future. Who knew she had such

evil intentions?" Nick added.

Finishing their explanation, the brothers cautiously observed Leslie's expression.

They weren't afraid of anyone in the family except Leslie. Because when he got angry, he

could be merciless.

Leslie exhaled a puff of smoke. "Is that all?"

The brothers exchanged glances, then opened a drawer and handed Leslie a document.

"Leslie, please accept this small token of respect, as our tribute to Aurelia," Nathan

offered.

"Yes, yes. Aurelia is the best!" Nick echoed.

Leslie glanced at it and nodded. "Eva..."

“Don’t worry, we’ll cooperate fully and make sure she can’t escape,” Nathan said.

“The internet,” Leslie said.

Nick pulled out another document. “The list is right here. We’ve been itching to ease Aurelia’s burden.”

Leslie acknowledged them with a grunt. “I’m off.”

“Take care, Leslie. When will you bring Aurelia over?” Nick blurted out.

Nathan kicked him. How could Leslie bring her home when she didn’t even know Leslie’s identity?

Leslie paused for a moment, then replied, “Soon.”

With that, he left.

Nick leaned closer to Nathan. “It looks like things are working out for them. I quite like

Aurelia.”

Nathan stroked his chin. “Indeed, Leslie seems different now. We wouldn’t see the end of the lecturing if this happened in the past. He’s become surprisingly considerate.”

By the time Leslie arrived home, it was midnight. He thought Aurelia was already asleep, but she was actually lying on the couch.

She jolted awake at the noises immediately.

He frowned. “Why are you napping here?”

Aurelia was a little dazed and rubbed her eyes. “I saw the food you ordered for me. I guess you wouldn’t eat given how busy you are, so I decided to wait for you to make supper.”

He paused. “I told you not to wait for me.”

She stretched and yawned. “You can’t cook, and going to sleep hungry isn’t good for stomach. You’ve been working hard and I’m basically unemployed no

w. I don't have to wake up early tomorrow. Just wait. I'll make you some soup."
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He hummed in response and stared at her from behind, recalling what his mother said.

There would be mundane things and surprises in life. Was Aurelia considered a surprise?

Aurelia put on the apron and walked over to the kitchen. "Mr. Synder, Leon Synder called me today."

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Leslie looked at Aurelia with a hint of surprise on his face and asked, "Why are you suddenly telling me this?"

"Oh, I'm sorry. It's nothing." Aurelia was tying her apron when she paused. She immediately turned around and walked into the kitchen.

Leslie was somewhat intrigued, so he got up and walked to the kitchen entrance. When he reached the entrance, he suddenly heard Aurelia mumbling inside.

"When we were checking the CCTV earlier, Leslie was obviously interested in me. But he still distanced himself from me. Now that I've taken the initiative to talk to him, he's acting indifferent about it. Isn't he kind of weird? I suppose it's my fault. I shouldn't have Ce said anything and just let it be," she muttered.

Aurelia muttered a few complaints while she was busy boiling water in a pot.

Leslie suddenly felt a strange sensation in his heart. He glanced at Aurelia, who looked dejected, and then he walked back to the dining table.

After a while, Aurelia sat down with a bowl of ravioli in hand.

"Dig in," she said.

Leslie hummed in assent and kept his head down as he ate. Then, he casually asked, "What did Leon want from you?"

"Huh? Are you interested in knowing?" Aurelia was momentarily taken aback before muttering, "I thought you didn't care about it."

"If you don't want to talk about it, forget it," Leslie said. He still wasn't used to meddling in other people's business. After asking Aurelia, he immediately dismissed his question. However, he was actually quite curious about it.

It had been so long since he last chatted with someone casually that he couldn't even remember it. It was why he was increasingly opposed to normal social interactions.

Aurelia leaned forward slightly and began to speak fervently, "He actually offered to give me 50 million dollars! I immediately turned him down though. He's so conceited! How can I put up with this? That's why..."

As Aurelia spoke, she gestured around wildly. At some point, Leslie even refilled her glass with water. Aurelia drank half of it before she continued talking. Despite everything, she

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didn't mention Leon's mocking remarks about Leslie.

Meanwhile, Leslie was aware that she was being considerate of his feelings. As a result, he found himself becoming increasingly curious about Aurelia.

In the past, he had wanted to distance himself from Aurelia as much as possible. Yet, at that moment, he was the one who couldn't help but get closer to her.

After an hour of non-stop chatter, dinner finally ended. Aurelia even lamented the fact that she wasn't able to punch Leon in the face.

Leslie was curious. "Why would you want to hit him?" he asked.

Aurelia, who was more relaxed after talking for so long, bluntly said, "That's because he said you're-"

She paused momentarily before continuing, “H—he said I was useless.”

Aurelia panicked and quickly changed what she was about to say.

However, Leslie immediately understood the cause of her anger—Aurelia was angry on

behalf of him.

Leslie refrained from probing further, fearing Aurelia would feel embarrassed and run off again. He simply remarked, “He deserved to be hit.”

Aurelia’s eyes flickered, and she let out a slight breath of relief. Finally, she looked at Leslie with a sense of unease.

“Mr. Synder, do you think I can win the trial this upcoming Friday?” she asked hesitantly.

“Yes. You’ll definitely win it,” Leslie assured her.

Aurelia’s expression immediately broke into a wide smile, and she exclaimed, “That’s true! You’re my lucky charm, after all. If you say I can win this, then I definitely can!”

Leslie chuckled to himself as he noted down how easy it was to appease Aurelia. He then gestured toward the clock on the wall and said, “It’s time for you to go to sleep.”

Aurelia nodded and smiled as she went back to her room.

Before going to bed, she made sure to turn off her phone to avoid being bothered by internet trolls again.

She had read all of those comments. They were nothing more than attempts to put her down. But why should she feel ashamed for such a thing?

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After all, she was innocent. The ones who should feel ashamed are those who spread groundless rumors about her online. She wouldn’t let any of those people off the hook.

But before that, she had to take good care of herself before the trial.

Meanwhile, Leslie returned to his study. After turning on the computer, he checked the ongoing online discussions, all of which were filled with obscenities.

After quickly typing on the keyboard, he soon found everything related to the incident. It appeared that there were a lot of online influencers involved, many of whom were

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As the fashion director of IN Magazine, Eva manipulated influencers to cyberbully people. She even discreetly boosted trending topics on social media to increase the visibility of her misdeeds.

Leslie couldn't help but wonder how she would react when she saw the evidence.

After finishing his tasks, he leaned back in his chair to rest. Then, his phone suddenly

rang.

The employee informed him, "Mr.

Synder, we determined that all the photos were digitally altered. Interestingly, the ones where Ms. Simmons' face was altered were all candid shots of her.

"Whoever did this must be quite familiar with Ms. Simmons and has access to a

significant number of her candid photos. We suspected that it was an acquaintance, so we followed the clues and found an interesting person."

Leslie coldly uttered, "Seth Martinez."

and was.

"You already knew this? It *is* indeed him.

The person

on the other However, it was probably Kimberly who got in touch with him. After that, both of them found someone to leak the photos.

“Seth and Ms. Simmons were together for three years, so he definitely has photos of her from all angles. These photos could be easily manipulated using deepfake technology, making it difficult to detect any signs of tampering.”

“Got it. I’ve also managed to find some photos. Get more people to post them online on Friday,” instructed Leslie.

After saying that, Leslie compressed the file and sent it to Daniel.

Daniel was stunned when he saw the file. After that, he randomly picked one of the files

inside and opened it.

“Damn! Mr. Synder, isn’t this a bit too intense?” Daniel called Leslie and stuttered in

shock.

After he was done looking through the photos, Daniel suddenly felt a wave of embarrassment wash over him.

“Bye.” Leslie casually hung up the phone.

Aurelia slept in until she stirred awake naturally. When she looked at the time, it was already 10:00 am.

After getting out of bed, she noticed that Leslie had already laid out the breakfast he bought on the table. Although it was cold, it could still be eaten after reheating it.

After microwaving it for a few minutes, she turned on her phone while eating brunch.

There were still a bunch of spam messages. She didn’t plan to read them, so she went online to check the current situation instead.

Perhaps the salacious rumor about her had gotten out of hand. Therefore, to prevent some people from continuing to spread unfounded rumors, the police issued a statement confirming she had filed a report for it.

They even released the list of individuals Aurelia had filed lawsuits against, which included the four men from the train station.

She had thought that this would stop the spread of the rumors, but she didn't expect the four men from the train station to retaliate.

Instead of putting an end to the slander against Aurelia, they even went ahead and

publicly disclosed the police statements they had made at the police station online. They had even sworn under oath.

"Did you think you're innocent just because you reported to the police? We know exactly what kind of person you are, Aurelia!" one of them said.

"We'll post the police statement here and let everyone be the judge of it! How could she act like that and still want to be seen as a victim?" another mocked.

"It's unbelievable how women nowadays have the guts to report such things to the police. If I was Aurelia, I would disappear from the eyes of the public instead! Why doesn't that woman have any sense of shame?" they remarked.

Their statements pleased many male chauvinists, causing a crazy surge in followers.

Furthermore, they were especially fearless after they showed the surveillance footage from the train station.

The surveillance footage had the beginning and end edited out, making it seem as if Aurelia was enraged and used her handbag to hit someone.

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Yet, the part where one of them made an inappropriate physical advance was edited out.

Aurelia furrowed her brows as she watched the surveillance footage, She was about to call the police when she received a call from the company.

"Aurelia, you're required to come to the company to complete your resignation procedures," the staff informed her.

Aurelia began to ask, "Alright, what do I need to

Before she could finish speaking, the other party quickly hung up the phone, as if not wanting to waste any more time talking to her.

It was truly every man for himself.

Aurelia sighed helplessly and called Dennis, the person in charge of her case.

“Hello, Mr. Clark. Why were they allowed to release the surveillance footage?” she asked.

Dennis replied, “Ms. Simmons, please rest assured. We’ve already obtained the evidence. However, we must uphold the integrity of the chain of evidence.

“Therefore, we typically refrain from releasing our evidence until this integrity is guaranteed. This precautionary measure also helps prevent any potential tampering or destruction of evidence.”

Aurelia nodded. “I see. What should we do

“Your husband has already provided evidence for those photo manipulations this morning,” informed Dennis.

“My husband? Do you mean Leslie Synder?” Aurelia asked.

Dennis responded, “That’s right. Weren’t you aware? Your husband arrived at the police station early this morning to submit evidence.

“He also requested that we avoid contacting you for the time being, saying that you were upset about the incident. It’s evident that your husband cares a lot about you.”

When she heard this, Aurelia felt somewhat touched.

Dennis continued, “Our technical operations unit has successfully identified the

perpetrator who disseminated the photos and videos. I believe you may be acquainted with this person.”

Aurelia was intrigued. “Who is it?”

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“It’s your ex,

Seth Martinez. And one of your colleagues, Kimberly Watson,” Dennis informed her.

Aurelia was rendered speechless. No wonder her expressions in those photos and videos looked so familiar.

“We’re preparing to send someone to apprehend them both immediately. Please come over when you have some time,” Dennis said.

“Hold on,” Aurelia interrupted Dennis.

“What’s the matter? You’re not considering letting them go, are you? Your incident has caused quite a commotion in Seacester, and we’re also treating this case very seriously,” he said.

“No, I’m not saying I want to let them go. I’m just wondering if it’s possible to arrest them tomorrow instead,” Aurelia suggested.

Dennis was confused. “Why?”

“Tomorrow, I have to handle the matter concerning the 50 million dollar necklace, and Kimberly is one of the people involved. I’m worried that her arrest might interfere with my negotiations with IN Magazine,” Aurelia explained.

Dennis wasn’t skilled in business negotiations, especially when there was a significant amount of money involved. However, he was still aware that they would prefer two parties involved present for the negotiation.

Considering everything, it seemed that escalating the situation wouldn’t be beneficial for

anyone.

After deliberating on the pros and cons, Dennis accepted Aurelia’s request, and they agreed to carry out the arrests the following day.

After sorting things out, Aurelia sent a message to Leslie.

“Thank you so much, Mr. Synder,” she said.

“It’s alright,” he replied.

“Are you coming home for dinner tonight?” she asked.

“Yes,” he informed her.

Aurelia wanted to tell him that she would be waiting for him. She had even typed out the message and was ready to send it. However, she felt that the message was somewhat inappropriate, so she deleted it and rewrote it.

“We’ll have something delicious for dinner tonight,” she said.

It took Leslie quite a while to respond as he was still typing. Yet, in the end, he only sent a one-word response. “Okay.”

Aurelia, accustomed to seeing one-word responses, couldn’t help but smile at that moment.

Afterward, she changed her clothes and made her way to Young Advertising.

When Aurelia’s colleagues saw her, they avoided her like the plague.

Since Aurelia had already resigned, she saw no reason to argue with them any further and silently began packing up her things.

As she was preparing to leave with her box of things, Kimberly and some others blocked her way.

“Wait a second, we need to check what you’re taking with you, just in case you’re thinking of selling company secrets to pay off your debts,” Kimberly said.

“I’m sorry to disappoint you, but I’ve already gone to the Human Resources and Administration Department and handed in all of the company’s property. They’ve also signed off on it. These are my personal belongings, and I have the right not to let you see them,” Aurelia said bluntly.

Aurelia’s eyes burned with defiance as she met Kimberly’s gaze.

Kimberly's jaw tightened. She was puzzled. It was unfathomable to her how an ordinary person like her could remain calm after learning that they had to pay 50 million dollars.

Moreover, at that moment, Aurelia was considered an infamous internet sensation. After experiencing mental and financial distress, she should have appeared gaunt and dejected.

Instead, Aurelia still had the guts to stand up to her.

Kimberly glanced at those around her and said, "Go and look through the box. After all, I'm acting in the best interests of the company. I'm curious to see who's still willing to help her now."

When they heard this, a few of her colleagues wore slightly enigmatic smiles on **their** faces.

"Aurelia, we hope you don't hold it against us. You brought this trouble upon yourself. We're simply acting in the best interests of the company," one of them insisted.

"Oh, please. You're just trying to kick me when I'm down, aren't you? You've never had the chance before, so you're not going to waste it now, right?" jeered Aurelia.

Since Aurelia had already resigned, she found no reason to put on a front.

Since they dared to approach her on the pretense of checking her belongings, weren't

they

just taking the opportunity to kick her while she was down?

They were unaware that she had already caught wind of their comments in those posts. They were the ones who said she was pretentious, that she was showing off her relationship, and that she was having an ambiguous relationship with her ex-boyfriend.

What were they trying to achieve by pretending to be so morally upright?

Aurelia's remarks left them mortified, and their faces flushed red with embarrassment.

“Aurelia, you’ve crossed the line. We-” they uttered.

Aurelia cut them off and retorted, “Are all of you Kimberly’s lackeys? Do you just obey her every command? If the company wants to check my belongings, there are plenty of qualified people who can do it. It’s not her place to tell you what to do.

“It’s my understanding that there are laws designed to safeguard people’s privacy. If I decide to take legal action, will she be held accountable or you’ll be the one to bear it all? Don’t think that if you suck up to her now, you’ll be able to ride her coattails to success.”

“How dare you!” they shouted.

Their faces turned ashen. They had always thought Aurelia was easy to talk to, but they had never expected her to be so sharp-tongued.

Aurelia, carrying the box in her hands, pushed past her colleagues and approached

Kimberly.

She taunted, “Kimberly, you’re playing a dangerous game. You’d better make sure to start buttering up with that wealthy beau of yours. Otherwise, if he gets too carried away one day and dies, you’ll be left with nothing.

“After all, a kept woman doesn’t have the same rights to inheritance as a legally wedded

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Despite Kimberly’s claims of her wealthy husband treating her well, Jason only gave her a low-quality diamond ring. Even their wedding wasn’t the luxurious outdoor wedding she had always dreamed of.

It was obvious that Kimberly was just a novelty for Jason. Who knew how long his interest would last?

With her facade shattered, Kimberly’s features twisted into a hideous grimace as she raised her hand to strike Aurelia.

Aurelia grabbed hold of her wrist and forcefully pushed her away.

Kimberly, wearing four–inch high heels, had no chance of fighting back. She lost her balance and crashed into a table.

“Aurelia Simmons!” she shouted.

“Kimberly, I expect an apology from you the next time we see each other,” Aurelia said.

“In your dreams! What right *do* you and your husband have to do this to me? If it weren’t two, would I have turned out like this? You truly got what you deserve!” Kimberly- said spitefully.

for

Aurelia pursed her lips. She didn’t expect Kimberly to harbor so much resentment toward her and Leslie.

However, at that moment, nothing mattered. After all, everything would be settled the following day.

She glanced at Kimberly and said, “My husband and I have never done anything to you. We didn’t pressure you into misconduct, nor did we compel you to marry a wealthy man

as a kept woman.

“And we certainly didn’t push you into plagiarism. Do you really think the world revolves. around you? You’re the one who shot yourself in the foot!”

Kimberly gnashed her teeth as she glared angrily at Aurelia.

“Bye.” After saying that, Aurelia immediately turned around and walked toward the door.

“Aurelia! You’re done for! You and your husband will never be able to repay the 50 million dollars! There’s no doubt he’ll leave you as soon as he has the chance!” Kimberly

continued shouting.

Aurella opened her mouth to speak, "You're quite—"

After Aurella cast a look at her, she deliberately left her sentence unfinished and went straight into the elevator.

Kimberly was someone unfazed by upfront ridicule, but she was most apprehensive

about others' private opinions of her. Therefore, she always wanted to show her flawless side to the public.

So the more Aurella left her sentences unfinished, the more annoyed she became.

While the elevator was descending, Aurelia could still hear Kimberly's angry outbursts.

"Aurella! Stop right there and explain yourself!" she screeched.

Aurelia sneered, as if she would stop for someone like her.

Kimberly would probably be restless for the rest of the night because of what happened.

Aurelia walked out of the company in a very good mood, only to be met with a couple of honks from a car across the street.

She glanced over and saw that it was Leslie's car. She walked over and then knocked on the car window.

"Mr. Synder, why are you here?" she asked.

Leslie began, "On my-

"On your way? I'm quite familiar with that phrase," Aurelia said, cutting him off.

"I'll be on my way then," Leslie said, as he awkwardly started the car.

"Wait a moment! Would you mind giving me a ride **if** you're going that way? I wore high heels today to appear more confident, but they're a bit too high, and 'my feet are killing me,'" Aurelia said.

After all, it was her last day, and she wasn't going to let anyone look down on her.

To make Leslie believe her, Aurelia held onto the car door and bent down. She lifted her skirt slightly and raised her foot.

Due to the pencil skirt she wore, whenever she raised her foot, the hem of her skirt would ride up.

1. up. As a result, her fair, slender legs were exposed in front of Leslie.

Aurelia had always worn loose-fitting suits before, so her physique had **been** severely underrated. In truth, her physique was shapely and alluring. It was the type that could easily capture one's attention.

At that moment, a man happened to be passing by. After he caught sight of the scene before him, he couldn't help but stare at Aurelia.

Aurelia remained oblivious, while Leslie's expression turned grim.

"Get in!" he barked.

"Alright," she said.

As soon as she heard Leslie's deep, cold voice, Aurelia immediately picked up her belongings and got into the car. It was then she noticed three men behind her had already taken out their phones.

She was immediately reminded of the four men at the train station. She was so scared that she immediately checked to see if there was anything wrong with her clothes.

Leslie spoke gravely, "It's not your fault if you're being secretly photographed. You shouldn't blame yourself first. It is clearly a problem with their manners and upbringing.

Aurelia nodded and said, "Got it."

As the car exited the parking lot, Aurelia watched the buildings receding behind her, feeling somewhat complicated. When she first came here, she had made a firm decision to establish herself in this place.

She didn't expect things to turn out like this.

After coming to her senses, Aurelia looked ahead and pointed to the left.

"Turn left ahead," she instructed.

"Where are we headed?" Leslie asked as he realized this wasn't the way back home.

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Aurelia refrained from responding to him. Instead, she grinned mysteriously.

She had checked her text messages earlier that day. Among the many abusive messages

she received, she noticed that she had received a normal message from someone.

It could be considered a good thing for those who have been subjected to online harassment for the last couple of days.

Aurelia pointed to the supermarket ahead and said, "Let's park there."

Although Leslie didn't know what Aurelia was up to, he still parked the car in the parking

space.

Aurelia calmly stepped out of the car, as if it was no different than her usual outings.

It was worth noting that the entire city was talking about her at that moment. If it had been someone else, they would have stayed home and refrained from going out.

After all, no one knew if they would ever encounter another train station incident where a man would distort the truth.

Yet, she was still going out and about as usual, as if it wasn't that big of a deal

.

After getting out of the car, Aurelia made her way in, with Leslie trailing after her. After walking for a while, he realized that Aurelia seemed to be deliberately keeping her distance from him.

Leslie thought he was just overthinking it, so he deliberately quickened his pace. Unexpectedly, Aurelia was also doing the same thing.

At that moment, he realized that Aurelia's actions were deliberate.

Leslie quickly surveyed their surroundings. Although there weren't any confrontational individuals like the four men at the train station, the scrutiny in everyone's gaze was

palpable.

While Aurelia was preoccupied, he moved to her side and shielded her from those scrutinizing gazes.

Aurelia's shoulders trembled as she raised her gaze to meet his. The once vibrant lipstick on her lips now sported a pale hue. She looked very exhausted from putting on a brave front.

She murmured, "Thank you."

"Let's go," he said.

Aurelia nodded in agreement and weaved her way through the crowd to reach a shop at the furthest end.

The elderly owner, Drew Lowe, didn't seem to pay much attention to the stuff happening online. He approached Aurelia and warmly welcomed her.

"Ms. Simmons, it's good to see you. I've finally fixed your shoes. Please have a look," he

said.

"Thank **you**, Mr. Lowe," Aurelia said as she took a shoebox from him.

As Aurelia opened the shoebox, she saw that the shoes her parents had gifted her were as good as new.

At that moment, all the depression she had felt on the way here dissipated. She deliberately took them out to show Leslie, asking, "Don't they look as good a

s new?" Leslie took a quick look at the shoes. No matter how new they looked, they were just a very ordinary pair of shoes. Nonetheless, Aurelia looked quite happy about it.

She was grinning from ear to ear, like a kid in a candy store.

Leslie nodded and said, "Yes, they do."

After saying that, he noticed that there were some people around who seemed to be discreetly inching closer. After that, some even took out their phones, getting ready to take pictures of Aurelia.

Leslie immediately reached out and pulled Aurelia into his embrace, pressing her head gently against his chest.

Aurelia was taken aback as her face was pressed against Leslie's chest. She struggled slightly and asked, "What's wrong?"

"We should go back first. There's too many people around," said Leslie.

Aurelia stuttered as she breathed in Leslie's scent, "Wait a moment. There's something else."

Leslie lowered his head and asked, "What else is there?"

When he saw this, Drew immediately smiled and said, "You two have such a lovely relationship. It's no wonder Ms. Simmons wanted to have shoes custom-made for you.

These are made entirely according to your old pair of shoes. **Try** them on and see if they fit."

"For me?" Leslie seemed momentarily surprised.

Drew quipped, "Of course it's for you! Does she have another husband in the picture?"

Leslie responded without hesitation, "There's only one husband, and that's me."

After hearing that, Aurelia's face flushed and she promptly pushed Leslie away.

“W—why don’t you try it on?” she asked.

Leslie hummed in assent, took the shoe box, and suddenly glanced at the people outside the shop. Whoever dared to ruin his mood wasn’t going to get away with it that **easily**.

Everyone seemed to have picked up on his mood and immediately stashed their phones and left.

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After the pesky crowd had dispersed, Leslie sat down and slowly opened the box. In truth, his expectations weren’t particularly high for a shoe shop that was hidden in the corner of the supermarket.

Bespoke leather shoes were a true test of the craftsman’s skill. So far, he hadn’t

encountered any craftsmen in the country that met his expectations.

As a result, he had his feet measured and a record kept abroad. Now, he only needed to choose the style and color he desired, and someone would regularly deliver him the newly crafted shoes.

Yet, after he opened the box, he realized he had misjudged Drew.

Drew’s craftsmanship was comparable to those of the so-called master craftsmen abroad. Besides, Drew even made some adjustments based on his old shoes, making them even more tailored to his walking habits.

When she noticed that he still hadn’t tried them on, Aurelia felt somewhat embarrassed. “My budget is tight right now. I’ll get you a new pair in the future once I start working!”

It was indeed a bit of a stretch for her to expect him to choose her 1000-dollar shoes over a pair of bespoke leather shoes that cost around 20 thousand dollars.

When he heard that, Leslie’s cold gaze wavered slightly. As he put on the shoes, he quipped, “In the future? I’ll accept that.”

Aurelia’s brow furrowed slightly. Why did his statement seem kind of odd?

After changing into the shoes, Leslie took a few steps and said, "They're very comfortable."

payment

Aurelia breathed a sigh of relief, turned to Drew, and said, "I'll be making the payment now. Thank you."

Drew smiled warmly and said, "They're comfortable because your wife really knows you well. When she brought over the shoes, she noticed your walking habits and asked us to make some adjustments based on that."

"Although these shoes aren't as expensive as your previous ones, I believe your wife's thoughtfulness is absolutely priceless."

Aurelia had the urge to cover Drew's mouth, but Leslie was already staring at her. All she

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could do was laugh awkwardly and duck her head, hoping that her laugh could mask her embarrassment.

Fortunately, Leslie hadn't said anything. However, she seemed to have sensed that he was smiling.

When she raised her head, she only caught sight of Leslie's back. It must have been her imagination. After all, Leslie had never smiled in crowded settings.

Leslie urged, "Let's go."

"Alright," she said.

Aurelia quickly caught up. It was definitely in her imagination that Leslie smiled just now.

After they arrived home, they cooked dinner together. Neither of them mentioned going to IN Magazine the following day.

On Friday morning, Aurelia was up early. She hadn't slept well the night before; and her mind was a bit muddled when she woke up. She had completely forgotten all the defenses she had thought of.

Although she had evidence to prove her innocence, she was afraid that she would say the wrong thing and cause everything to fall apart. As worry crept in, her self-assurance

waned.

After changing her clothes, she dragged open the door with a sense of dread. She involuntarily squinted as the sunlight from the nearby window fell upon her.

As she opened her eyes, she noticed the figure in the living room. That figure was clad in a white shirt and black suit - a timeless classic. In the sunlight, that figure was haloed with soft light, making him look ethereally stunning.

Leslie glanced down and calmly adjusted his cufflinks. "What are you staring at? It's almost time, let's go."

Aurelia came back to her senses. "Are you going to come along with me?"

"What?" he asked.

Leslie's deep, husky voice was too much for her to handle in the morning.

Although she wasn't listening to what he was saying attentively, Aurelia nodded vigorously. As she continued to listen, she felt like his voice was music to her ears.

She had never quite understood such a saying before, but now it made sense to her:

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30

She made an effort to divert her attention. When she lowered her head to put on her shoes, Leslie walked over and changed his shoes as well.

He was actually wearing the leather shoes she had given him. Paired with his outfit, **it** made him look imposing and dignified—giving him a commanding presence.

Leslie stood at the doorway and said, “Aurelia, quit looking. We’re seriously going to be late.”

Aurelia was stunned. “Huh? Oh, okay!”

That was so embarrassing! She was unexpectedly captivated by that man’s appearance at

such a moment.

What would Leslie think of her?