

## MARRIAGE ON PAPER

### Chapter 25

Ryleigh searched and searched. She looked everywhere in the hospital and asked everyone she could find.

Damian had indeed disappeared.

She collapsed to the ground, exhausted.

Dark clouds obscured the moon, and the dim streetlamps drew her shadow extraordinarily long, like a ray of loneliness.

Damian was nowhere to be found, as if he had vanished into thin air.

He was scheduled to have surgery the next day, but he had vanished.

Her heart was desolate and empty.

All of her efforts had been futile.

Paxton looked at Ryleigh curled up on the ground in front of him.

She was huddled into a ball, her head buried deep in her knees, her hair disheveled, and her shoulders trembled slightly. Is she crying?

Paxton felt stuffy in his chest

Damian had been missing for nearly two years. What was Ryleigh's history with Damian? Was it worth her pain?

As she looked up, Ryleigh breathed deeply. However, she just sat there with a vacant expression as though her brain had stopped working.

She was not crying.

There were no tears, but that was only because they would not come out. Her heart felt like it was being stabbed with a knife. She was at a loss and felt an infinite void.

Paxton had never seen her in such a state before.

She appeared more melancholy due to the feeling of desolation and gloom, but it had a fatal allure.

It would make anyone want to love her tenderly.

He took a deep breath and resisted the urge to hug her.

"Do you have to be so sad? This bankroller has vanished. You can always find another one."

He clearly wanted to console her, but ended up hurting her instead.

Paxton's heart was divided, and he was furious with himself. Why am I angry? Why is she so sad? Am I not a better financial backer than Damian? Isn't R&S Group more powerful than Baldwin Bank?

Damian did have the title of elegant and noble son in the upper echelons of society, and Paxton knew that many famous ladies admired him, his sister being one of them. However, he considered himself superior to Damian in both wealth and appearance.

What on Earth am I thinking? How can I be so low to compare myself to Damian Baldwin? That is utterly insane!

Ryleigh was already numb and immune to Paxton's

mockery.

"Let's go," she said as she slowly stood up and patted the dust off her body without showing emotion.

"Where to?" Paxton was taken aback.

"Home. Sophia came to accompany Grandma for an infusion today. They must have gone home. If we don't go back, Grandma will be suspicious." Ryleigh walked away while rubbing her aching arm.

After getting in the car, she wanted to put on her seat belt.

She discovered, however, that her hands were shaking so severely that she could not latch it in despite numerous attempts.

"Allow me."

Paxton's large palm covered her cold hand, and when he lightly pressed it, the seat belt was fastened with a click. She was clearly uneasy, but she insisted on acting as if nothing had happened, making everyone uncomfortable.

He was close, and she could smell the strong scent of his distinct masculinity.

The cold hands were suddenly wrapped in warmth.

Ryleigh instinctively retracted her hand and leaned back.

"Thank you," she said, her face blank.

Her distant demeanor and indifferent expression irritated him greatly.

Ryleigh turned to look out the window. "Don't worry, today's events will not affect you. I'll keep my promise to Grandma."

Then, she stopped talking.

She was looking blankly out the window, and she noticed the lights flickered and danced in the distance.

Paxton stepped on the gas pedal hard. He was frustrated, and he had nowhere to vent.

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