

# Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted by Eleven Jewell

## Chapter 148-179

### Chapter 148

Stella called Vermont before she arrived at his company

At that time, Keegan was sitting on the couch drinking tea in Vermont's office Vermont lost a few rounds of a game. He was quite angry as he stared at the person who had an indifferent look sitting opposite of him, "You didn't go home after you finished work. You told me you had something to do when I asked you to go to the nightclub. And the thing that you wanted to do was sit in my office drinking tea for an hour?"

Keegan faintly glanced at him, "You don't have anything else to do, too, do you? Continue playing your game."

Vermont was speechless.

He squinted as he said in a probing manner, "Are you still fighting with Stella?"

Keegan stopped moving. He expressionlessly said, "No."

Vermont was sure once Keegan denied it, "Seriously? It'd already been a few days. If you're unhappy, go home and talk to your wife. Why are you spending time with me and venting your anger on me? You have a wife, but I'm still single. I want to go out and find my true love."

Keegan looked askance at him, "You want to find your true love at a nightclub?"

"What's wrong with nightclubs? There are good ladies in the nightclubs too. Didn't you first meet Stella in a nightclub?"

Keegan frowned, "Who told you that the first time Stella and I met was at a nightclub?"

Vermont was stunned for a moment, "Where was it if it wasn't in a nightclub?"

He remembered very clearly that he and his friends forcefully brought Keegan to a nightclub to celebrate Keegan's birthday five years ago. They had a masquerade party there.

There was a murder mystery game going on upstairs. Two ladies wandered off and were harassed by a few drunken men. One of the men threw a punch when the ladies did not do what the men wanted. The ladies' friends came to help. The two parties had a heated argument. They even wanted to call the police.

Initially, Keegan and Vermont did not care about that. But after all, that man was there for their party. If someone called the police, it would be very insulting to Keegan if he had to go to the police station to make a statement on his birthday. And it would not be nice if this incident got out.

They wanted to go and negotiate with the other party to resolve this issue. After they went out, they saw a young girl with a ponytail recording the few guys using her phone. She was clearly frightened because her face turned pale. But she still shouted, "Stop moving. I've recorded you, and your faces can be seen clearly on the camera. You guys sexually harassed people and even hit them. There are laws."

She was very imposing, but she looked too young. She was not intimidating at all. And on top of that, she was gorgeous. The men had lecherous interests in her suddenly. They stretched their arms and wanted to touch her face.

Vermont wanted to watch the fun a little longer. But Keegan suddenly grabbed a glass and

threw it at the guy's feet.

The loud sound made everyone go quiet suddenly.

The men had sobered up. They knew Keegan was furious. They did not dare to mess around anymore. They then apologized and paid the other party to settle the incident.

At that time, Vermont did not really pay too much attention. But when he knew that the lady Keegan was going to marry was the girl at the nightclub, he started to feel that how Keegan looked at the girl was not innocent.

'I thought that nightclub was where they first met. But Keegan said it wasn't.

'So, where did they first meet?'

Vermont touched his chin as he squinted, "When you met Stella at that nightclub, she was just

nineteen years old. If you met her earlier than that, don't tell me that you and her first time happened when she was still a minor."

Keegan was speechless.

Chapter 149

Vermont coughed when he saw Keegan's ruthless look. He asked, "What I meant was, was she still a minor when you first met?"

Keegan petulantly said, "Mind your own fucking business!"

Vermont then spoke obscenely after Keegan, "I wanted to mind my fucking business too. How do I get the chance to do that if you don't leave?"

His phone rang as he said that. He then glanced at it. He suddenly perked up when he saw it was Stella who had called him. He quickly put her on speaker before he accepted the call.

"Mr. Snyder, it's me."

Keegan stopped moving as he abruptly looked over.

Vermont smiled as he said, "Stella, is there something I can do for you?"

"Are you in your office?"

"I am. What's wrong?"

"It's nothing. I just need you to be there. I have a box of Newblaubia oysters with me now. I'll leave it at your company's front desk later. Remember to bring it back after work."

"Newblaubia oysters?" Vermont glanced at Keegan, "It's not easy to get that. Keegan loves to eat those. Why not bring it home and let him eat? It's very good for him. It can improve your relationship with him."

Stella knew Vermont was making fun of her. However, she was not angry as she faintly said, "Eating oysters can't help with Keegan's problem. I think he needs to visit a doctor."

Vermont almost laughed out loud.

Keegan immediately looked displeased.

Vermont did not want to go too far. He tried not to laugh as he said, "All right then. Thank you, Stella."

After the call ended, Vermont laughed as he hit the table, "What did you do to her? Why did she speak so harshly?"

Keegan remained silent with a sullen face.

When Stella arrived at Vermont's company, he was already waiting for her at the main door. Keegan, whom she did not talk to for the past two days, was with him too.

Stella wanted to step on the accelerator and sped away when she saw Keegan's face. But she drove to them in the end. She then lowered her car window.

"The stuff is inside the boot. Take it yourself. I'm not getting off the car."

Vermont smiled as he said, "Stella, I need your help with something."

Stella looked at him, "What is it?"

"There's a singles party today. You know that I've been single for quite a long time. I want to date a girl who's my type, seriously. But I'm also afraid that I'll meet someone crazy who'll

constantly pester me even after I reject her. So, I want to find a female friend to go with me. If I meet that kind of girl, she can help me with it. If I find a single friend, I'm afraid she will misunderstand me. If I find someone in a relationship, I'm afraid her boyfriend will take it the wrong way After I pondered deeply, I only think you can help me with this."

Stella was speechless.

think this is too much."

Keegan looked better. 'Luckily, she has got some brains.'

Vermont said, "Don't worry. I'll pay you. That bracelet was sold for over thirty million dollars. last time. I'll pay you double the commission."

"It's not about the commission..."

"Triple!"

"This is a moral issue..."

"Quadruple!"

Stella pursed her lips, "Can you tell me exactly what you want me to do?"

Keegan was not happy.

'Her moral compass can be flexibly changed?'

Vermont cracked up, "I'll tell you in the car?"

Chapter 150

As soon as the car door was opened, Keegan went in too. He even sat in the front passenger

seat.

Stella did not like it. She frowned as she said, "Why did you get in?"

Keegan put on the seatbelt. Then, he petulantly said, "If you can go with him., why can't I?" Vermont was afraid that they would argue again. So, he defended Keegan, "Keegan is going help me to look for girls. He has experience in looking for a wife."

Stella was speechless.

'He has that experience, my ass. But he had many two-timing experiences, though!'

But Stella wanted to earn money. So, she just put her unhappiness aside and drove them to that singles party.

Stella was asked to join this party out of a sudden. So, her outfit looked overly simply compared to the girls who dressed up very beautifully.

She was in a ponytail, wearing a white tee shirt, blue jeans, and a pair of canvas shoes. She looked out of place beside the two men in suits and ties.

Before they went into the venue, Vermont said to them, "I'll go in separately from you two. After I go in, you guys find a seat nearby and observe me. If the girl I talk to is my type, I'll do an 'okay' sign. You two can then leave me alone. If I do a 'v' sign, I'll need Stella to come and help me out."

Stella did the 'okay' sign, "Okay."

Vermont entered the party very quickly. Only Stella and Keegan were still in the car.

Stella turned the music on and looked down to use her phone. She just ignored the person next to her.

"Grandma sent me a text message just now. She told me that you gifted her a box of oysters." His tone was deep. He sounded a little angry too.

Stella was still sulking. She did not pay attention to his tone. Instead, she said superficially, " My dad gave me two boxes."

'She gave one box to grandma and another box to Vermont. But she didn't give it to me.'

Keegan was unhappy.

It was just a box of oysters. He could have easily gotten it, but it still bothered him.

'She'd immediately give it to me when she thought something was good back then. But now, even Vermont could get a gift from her!'

"Don't blindly spend effort in the wrong places. Vermont doesn't like this thing."

After he muffled that, he felt that what he said did not sound right. It sounded like he was blaming her, but he wanted to say that Vermont could not tell what was good or bad. It would be a waste to give him the oysters.

But before he could add to what he said, Stella lifted the corners of her lips, "Mr. Kane, thank you for reminding me of that. I'm not an ignorant person. I gifted him that because I wanted to thank him for helping me. It's Mr. Snyder's business whether he likes that or not. It's fine if he throws that away."

But Stella could not be blamed for misunderstanding Keegan. He had a history of blaming her. On Keegan's birthday, during the first year Stella and Keegan got married, some friends came over to visit him. Stella was very nervous and took it seriously when she first met Keegan's friends. She helped the maid to make a table full of dishes to treat them.

Although Stella's cooking was average, her pastry was very delicious. She was full of praise. After that, Stella made many pastries. Then, she packed them and gave them to the people who came.

When Keegan knew about that, he was furious with Stella.

He probably felt that she was toadying his friends. Or he might simply hate her for trying to be close to his friends without telling him.

After that incident, Keegan rarely brought her to join this gathering. He probably disliked her for being less graceful and unpresentable.

But what Keegan did not know was she did not gift his friends because she wanted to fit in. Instead, she just wanted to know more about his likings from his friends. She wanted to become a person that he liked.

But it turned out that if someone disliked you, they would nitpick about what you did even if you did it well.

Keegan was a little angry, 'She rather gave the thing to Vermont for him to throw it away than give it to me.'

"Are you angry with me?"

## Chapter 151

“Not at all.” Stella clearly did not say what she meant, “Why’d I be angry with you? That’d make me look so unappreciative. Mr. Kane, you’ve overthought.”

Keegan frowned, “Don’t call me Mr. Kane! It’s annoying.”

When Stella called him ‘Mr. Kane,’ she sounded like she was insulting him. It made him extremely uncomfortable.

“How should I address you then? Mr. Keegan? Keegan?”

Stella acted like she seriously pondered for a moment. She said, “Why not you pick one?”

Keegan stared at Stella, who put on an act. He hated it very much. “How did you address me back then?”

Stella stopped moving.

She always called him “honey” back then.

Since Keegan did not disapprove of being called ‘honey,’ she had always called him that.

‘When did I stop calling him that?’

‘I don’t really remember it. Probably after I realized that Keegan wouldn’t like me no matter how hard I tried.’

“It’s just a form of address. If you liked being addressed as Mr. Kane back then, I’ll continue to call you that in the future.”

Keegan glanced at her as he faintly said, “Call me that then.”

Stella was speechless.

‘I intentionally provoked him. Why did he behave so unpredictably?’

Keegan raised his eyes when he noticed she did not talk after a long time. “Why haven’t you called me that?”

Stella pursed her lips.

“Mr. Kane, I think it’s inappropriate for me to call you that, considering the relationship we’re in now.”

It seemed like Keegan was waiting for her to say that. He immediately said in her words, "It's just a form of address. I like how you called me back then. It's not inappropriate."

Stella was speechless.

'Piece of garbage!'

Of course, she was not willing to give in. She intentionally said sarcastically, "Mr. Kane, you're weird. You were tired of me calling you that back then. But now, when we're going to get a divorce, you keep wanting me to call you that. Forcing one's will upon another won't get good

results."

Keegan faintly glanced at her, "I'm not sure I'll get a good result. Why not you just call me

that."

She suddenly felt that she was being hit on. But Keegan looked very serious. She also felt that she might have overthought. Her ears were red as she petulantly said the word "lame."

She then undid the belt and got off the car.

Keegan stared at her back for a few seconds before he slowly stepped out of the car.

The staff at the door gave Stella a rose when she walked in. Only the females had a unique token at this party tonight.

If a girl met a guy that she liked, she could give the rose to that guy. If the guy accepted it, it would mean he was interested in the girl too.

Likewise, if the guy was interested in a girl, he could directly ask her if she could give the rose to him. If she agreed, it would mean they were both interested in each other.

This was the first time Stella saw this form of group dating. She found it interesting.

She had a group dating when she was in school. But some of them had planned long ago. They confessed their love through the group dating event. It was fine if the two of them were interested in each other. But it would be moral blackmailing when the person being publicly confessed to did not like the other person.

The girls did not have initiative at all. Some men even surrounded the girls and judged them. She had only been to that kind of event once and never went to those parties again.

The bar was huge. After Stella walked around the bar, she only saw Vermont sitting in front of the bar counter, flirting with a girl who had a good figure.

'This guy took a long time to spruce himself up in the car. He does look quite good.'

The girl looked like she was very interested in Vermont. She was sitting next to him and constantly chatted with him.

## Chapter 152

Stella sat down at a table nearby so she could easily help him out if he needed.

'He's paying me two to three hundred thousand just to save him from unwanted encounters. I'm very happy to earn this money.'

As soon as Stella sat down, Keegan followed her and sat opposite her.

And right after he sat down, Stella noticed a few girls sitting behind them, constantly looking in their direction.

Stella curled her lips. 'He's just a normal human being. What's so interesting about him?'

A waiter came over and asked her what she wanted. Stella had to drive later, so she said she wanted a glass of juice.

The waiter said, "Miss, for every one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight dollars' worth of spending on alcohol, we'll give you an extra rose."

Stella wondered, "Why do I need so many roses for?"

The waiter asked, "This is your first time attending our singles party, right?"

Stella nodded.

The waiter passionately explained, "The more roses you have, the more people you can give the roses to. After all, it's hard to get to know someone just by spending a night together. The chance of successfully matching is higher when you meet more people. Of course, guys can also get the roses by buying our alcohol. They can then give the roses to the girls they are interested in. The girl who gets the most roses will receive our bar's supreme VIP status for a year."

Stella was stunned.

'I thought this matchmaking method was innovative just now. But this is just the bar's different ways of promotion.'

'And he said it can increase the chance of success. But that'll just encourage everyone to have romantic encounters with multiple people, whether they're interested in that person. So is this really a serious matchmaking event?'

She softly asked, "What's the benefit of becoming the supreme VIP in your bar?"

"Thirty percent discount on alcohol. We'll also gift you a fruit platter if you meet the minimum spend."

Stella was speechless.

"The owner of this bar is definitely a business genius! He has such an incredible way of earning money!"

"Does your shop host this kind of singles party often?"

Keegan, who had been listening to the conversation, finally frowned, "Why do you ask so much about it?"

'She's so unfaithful even after she's married!'

"I was just simply asking. What's the problem?" Stella rolled her eyes.

The waiter said, "We have this event every month. You can add me on WhatsApp later. And I'll add you to a group. We'll notify the group if there are events."

"Oh." Stella nodded as she curiously said, "The girl who received the most roses last month, how many roses did she get?"

"Over five hundred roses."

"Two thousand dollars for a rose. Five hundred roses... That's at least a million-dollar worth of alcohol spending.

'And this was just based on the girl who received the most roses. So many people attend this event. Conservatively speaking, they can earn at least a few million dollars today.'

"So, miss, would you like to order alcohol?"

"Maybe later. Just get me a glass of juice for now."

The waiter suddenly did not look as welcoming as before.

"What kind of juice do you want?"

The waiters probably received commissions from selling alcohol. But, unfortunately, this waiter had just wasted his time talking to customers like Stella, who did not want to buy any alcohol.

Stella was not bothered by the waiter's attitude. Instead, she faintly said, "Lemon juice."

The waiter wrote down her order and said, "just a second." He then turned his head to look at Keegan as he smiled again, "Sir, what kind of alcohol do you want?"

Keegan raised his eyes, "Same as her."

The waiter was speechless.

### Chapter 153

After the attendant left, Stella took out her phone and tapped away. Keegan glanced at her phone and noticed she was on the calculator application.

He asked in bewilderment, "What're you calculating?"

Stella did not lift her head and continued tapping away on her screen, "I'm calculating how much a bar like this can earn per month."

Keegan was speechless.

'Nowadays, I get increasingly confused about the things in this woman's head,' he thought.

"Do bars have peak and off-peak seasons?" Stella asked.

"Yes," Keegan pursed his lips.

He continued, "Springtime is the off-peak season; many return to their hometowns before and after spring, so the people flow is significantly lesser. Summertime is the peak season; there's an increase in everyone's nightlives. Besides, bars are considered recreational summer retreats due to the hot weather. During wintertime, the customer volume is lesser than in the summertime. However, the income is still decent due to the many festivities."

Stella seemed really interested in the matter.

"The net annual profit would be over 10 million at this rate."

"Something like that," Keegan said and paused momentarily.

He continued, "Why're you asking?"

“I was wondering if it would be a good idea for me also to open a bar nearby?”

Keegan glanced at her, “Not really. You’ll probably lose money and go out of business before earning money.”

Stella was speechless.

“All you do is be a wet blanket!”

Keegan frowned, “It’s not that easy running a bar. It took four years before this bar earned a profit; it had been losing money for the past four years. This location is on the outskirts, and crime rates are high wherever alcohol is prevalent. Since there are all kinds of customers here, one little slip-up and the bar will have to suspend its operations because of some matters.”

Stella froze momentarily, “How do you know so much?”

“This bar is one of the Kane family’s properties,” Keegan said coolly.

Stella was at a loss for words.

Seeing Stella’s stunned expression, Keegan added, “It’s within the scope of my administration now.”

Once again, she was at a loss for words.

‘After going through all that fuss, Keegan’s actually the one who came up with this marketing strategy?! I knew it. There aren’t that many crooked bosses in Rivera!’ thought Stella.

While they were speaking, a girl holding a rose walked up to their table.

“Can I sit next to you, handsome?”

The girl sat at the table behind them just now. She was sweet-looking and had streaks of blonde highlights. She had long, straight legs under her shorts and washboard abs right above them. She also wore a skimpy white tank top that barely covered her chest. Her breasts seemed as if they were to spill out of her top due to their fullness.

Stella looked down at her chest and thought gloomily, ‘Are kids nowadays this well-developed? Even I’m attracted to that body of hers.’

Meanwhile, Keegan did not spare her a glance. Instead, he said to her indifferently, “Do as you please.”

The girl pulled the chair and sat down. After she placed her hand under her chin, she tilted her head and openly stared at Keegan.

“Did you come here after work? Not many men here are wearing suits.”

Her voice was so cutesy and flirty that Stella felt as if she were about to go weak.

However, Keegan was like a monk in a land filled with women; he was unfazed by the prettiest

women.

He even ruined the moment and said, “Is there a rule that suits aren’t allowed?”

The girl smiled with her eyes.

“Of course, there isn’t. Suits expose the shortcomings of one’s physique, but you look really good in a suit. I couldn’t take my eyes off you when you walked in just now,” she said.

Stella was at a loss for words.

“This girl is... Really good,” she thought.

“I’m here with a friend,” Keegan answered indifferently,

He did not purposefully come, so he did not intentionally dress up.

The girl understood, “It’s your first time here?”

Keegan did not deny her question.

The girl smiled coolly and placed the rose into the pocket on his chest. Then, she smiled, “I’ll take you around and familiarize you with this place.”

Stella stared at the rose and was startled for a moment. However, just as Keegan turned to look at her, she quickly looked down and pretended to look at her phone.

Keegan’s gaze seemingly stayed on her momentarily. Soon after, Stella heard him say, “You’re very familiar with this place?”

Chapter 154

The girl said, “I’m a regular at this place. There’s a dance floor over there and a card room. I’ll bring you over to take a look.”

Keegan was silent for a moment before he answered, "If you please."

Stella's heart clenched abruptly.

When she lifted her head, Keegan and the girl had already disappeared into the group.

'That girl is gorgeous, and her features resemble Bella's a little. She's Keegan's type, so he has no reason to reject her,' Stella thought.

Suddenly, Stella felt a little suffocated.

'Keegan and I will divorce soon, so he'll eventually be with other women. Haven't I come to this realization long ago? Why do I feel so upset seeing him not reject other women? The saying that one should meet gains or losses with composure is easier said than done. I know best how hard it is to leave a relationship. Vermont and the girl beside him also seem to have hit it off and are having a good chat. He probably doesn't need any of my help,' she thought. Stella lowered her head and used the straw to pick out the seeds that had not been removed from the lemon slices. However, her mind was still on Keegan.

'What's he doing with that girl? Doesn't Keegan like Bella Young? He probably won't do anything with the girl. But even though Keegan likes Bella, didn't he still marry me and sleep with me? Men and women are different; men can completely separate their needs and feelings. So even though he likes Bella, that doesn't stop him from sleeping with other women,' she thought.

While Stella's thoughts wandered off, her phone suddenly rang. It was an unknown number, so she rejected the call. However, the person called her again right after she had hung up. Stella took her phone and went outside to answer the call.

"Hello?"

"It's me."

Stella was startled, "Mr. Wood, the director?"

"Mhm," Daniel skipped the pleasantries and got straight to the point, "Are you free tomorrow morning? Come over and try out a role."

Everything happened suddenly, so Stella's brain was puzzled for a moment. Her mouth moved on its own accord, "Didn't you already cast another actress?"

"That's for a different role. Are you coming?"

"Yes!" Stella quickly answered as if she were worried he would reject her.

“This role has little parts. Besides that, the pay is really low and probably less than you voice acting for a drama. Are you sure?”

Stella hesitated for a moment. Then, just as Daniel frowned and thought she would reject him, he heard her say the very next moment, “Are meals included?”

Daniel was speechless.

“Breakfast is not included, but lunch and dinner are. Supper will also be included if we film at night ”

“Then, there won’t be a problem,” said Stella.

Since she did not have an assistant, settling her meals on set might be somewhat troublesome if meals were not included.

“Then, come for the tryout tomorrow. I’ll text you the time and address later. Also, this is my number; save it.”

After Stella hung up the phone, she felt she was still dreaming.

When she returned to the bar, Keegan still had yet to return, and Vermont had also disappeared. Seeing the attendant coming over to clear the table, she downed the water left in her glass and called Vermont.

“That bastard’s phone is actually off!’ she thought.

Perhaps the sounds in the bar were too loud because Stella felt her head turn heavy. The blood was rushing to her head as her cheeks turned warm. Then, she felt her vision starting to sway.

She alertly sensed that something was amiss, so she grabbed her phone and walked out while calling Keegan’s number.

Before the call connected, someone bumped into her phone, and it fell.

She bent down and picked it up, and her vision wobbled even more. Then, someone tugged her wrist and pulled her up.

A voice said beside her ear, “Miss, your phone.”

Chapter 155

When the voice traveled into Stella’s ear, it sounded as if it came from a distance; it was indistinct and surreal.

Stella forced out a thank you and reached out to grab her phone. Just as she stepped forward, her knees gave out. She could no longer stand.

Someone grabbed her by the waist and pulled her into their arms.

Stella heard the warning bells in her head blared, enveloped in a person's unfamiliar scent. She struggled with all her might, but her limbs had gone weak; her movements seemed feeble as if she were playing around.

Stella was dragged out in the person's arms. One of the attendants noticed something amiss and asked if they needed help.

Just as Stella was about to call out for help, the hand on her shoulder promptly tightened on her neck. In an instant, she felt a suffocating feeling and could not make a sound.

"It's alright; she's my girlfriend. She had too much to drink and is upset with me," one of them explained.

Then, another person said, "I'm so done with you two. You two had such a huge argument. Now I even have to accompany you to look for her this late at night! Let's hurry up and leave. I've got something to do later!"

go

"Give John and the others a call and tell them we found her. Then, ask them to home."

When the attendant saw how natural their conversation sounded, they did not ask any more questions. After all, these kinds of situations were way too common at bars.

As soon as the attendant left, one of the men placed a jacket over Stella's head.

After the two dragged Stella out of the bar, the man with his hand on her neck released his grip. She could finally catch her breath.

"We almost got caught!" one of them spoke just as they exited the bar.

He continued, "This new drug is pretty good; its effect is prompt."

"Stop wasting time and call a cab."

"I did; it'll be here soon. Let me go buy something good first," the person said as he laughed. sleazily.

"Get me a few of those pills."

“Understood!”

Hearing the two’s foul conversation, Stella paled. Since she was still very conscious, she could hear their entire conversation.

‘I’m sure I was drugged. It must have been that half glass of lemon water I drank after I took the phone call. They secretly drugged it while I had gone outside. I never expected case examples on crime TV programs to happen to me. It obviously isn’t these two’s first time committing such a crime; they’re really experienced and worked together to cover for each

other. It won’t end well for me if I end up in their hands. I can’t stand by idly!’ she thought.

Stella forcibly bit down on her lip to regain her sense. The pain, mingled with the taste of blood, sobered her up a little.

While the man was on the phone with the cab driver, Stella charged up her strength and bit the man’s arm. The man instantly flung her away in pain.

Stella staggered and fell onto the ground.

However, she could not feel any pain at all. She struggled to get up and quickly stumbled away. “F\*ck! You b\*tch!”

The man turned red in anger and ran after her. He grabbed her by the hair and dragged her back.

Stella struggled with all she had, and her actions quickly caught the attention of the passersby. The man hugged her waist and smiled apologetically, “Honey, I was wrong. So cut it out, and let’s go home. I’ll listen to everything you say in the future, okay?”

“I don’t know him!”

Stella wanted to shout. However, her voice was as soft as a whisper due to the effects of the drug.

Her voice was quickly drowned out by the man’s, “Honey, you can’t say such a thing no matter how angry you are. It’s just a bag. I’ll buy it for you, alright?”

Then, he said to the crowd surrounding them, “This is my wife. The two of us just got married last year. I have a photo of our marriage certificate on my phone.

Then, he produced a photo of a marriage certificate on his phone, and the woman in the photo was Stella. The iron-clad evidence of a marriage certificate instantly cleared everyone’s doubt. ‘Since it’s someone else’s family affairs, we better not intervene,’

thought the bystanders. Stella was terrified, "That's not true; he's not my husband. My husband- Mmph!"

The man covered her mouth before she could finish her sentence.

"Honey, could you please stop it?"

The man had sprayed some type of drug on his palm, so there was a weird scent. When Stella smelled it, her head instantly felt heavy; even her struggle became significantly weaker.

The man pulled her into his arms and smiled apologetically at the crowd, "Sorry about that, everyone."

One of the girls felt something amiss. She stopped them.

"This lady doesn't seem quite conscious. We should wait for her to regain consciousness and not only take your word for it. Otherwise, we'll call the cops and let them handle it."

When the man heard about calling the cops, a harsh glint flashed across his eyes. He looked upset and said, "What did you mean by that? Would I hurt my own wife? Why would an arguing husband and wife go to the police station? To make a joke out of ourselves?"

"Why would going to the police station make you a joke? She's your wife, and she also has human rights..."

The girl wanted to continue arguing. However, her friend beside her was a little worried seeing how the man was acting. The friend quickly advised the girl not to meddle in other people's

business

"Human rights, human rights. You college students go around causing gender dichotomy and making a mess. My wife keeps on arguing with me because she saw your discourse!"

The man grew more and more enthusiastic as he spoke. He seemed like he had no intentions of giving up.

The girl had turned red in anger. After all, she was still a green college student.

Just as the crowd was about to disperse, genuinely thinking it was a family affair, someone walked through the crowd and grabbed the man by the back of his neck. Then, the person flung the man aside and pulled Stella into his arms.

“Who the fuck are you?” the man cursed.

He continued, “Let go of my wife!”

Stella was about to lose consciousness. However, she forced herself to open her eyes and vaguely saw Keegan’s silhouette. Tears welled up in her eyes and trickled down her face.

Her tears seemed to trickle into Keegan’s heart. He pursed his lips and wiped away a tear from the corner of her eyes. Then, he lifted his head and said to the girl who spoke just now, “Help me take care of her for a moment.”

“I’m fucking talking to you!”

The man shouted as he reached out to grab Keegan’s collar. However, he was grabbed on the wrist before he could.

Vermont smiled sinisterly, “I’ve been waiting for days; I finally caught you, scum. You motherfucker! Who gave you the fucking guts to mess on my turf?”

The man had a panicked look in his eyes. Regardless, he continued to act tough, “Who are you? I don’t know what you’re talking about. Let go of me, or I’ll call the co-

co-Arggh!”

Before the man could finish his sentence, his arm was twisted to his back. He let out an agonizing scream.

“Let her go.”

Stella vaguely heard Keegan say.

She wanted to open her eyes and see what Keegan was doing. However, the effect of the drug was too strong. After fighting the drug’s effects for a while, she could not help but finally fall into darkness.

Before she lost consciousness, she seemed to hear Keegan say something important.

Chapter 156

When Stella came to, she was already in the hospital.

Meanwhile, Felicity had dozed off in front of her

Just as Stella was about to move, she noticed an IV needle in her arm. There was an IV drip above her head, slowly dripping the contents downward and flowing into her body

“Felicity...”

When Stella opened her mouth, she realized her throat was dry and in pain. She could not help but cough a few times.

The sounds of her cough startled Felicity, and she immediately woke up

“You’re finally awake, Stella’ You scared me to death What happened to you? Why’d you suddenly faint?” she asked in a panic

Clearly, Felicity still did not know about last night’s events. However, Stella could not explain things right now She quickly asked, “Where’s Keegan?”

“I didn’t see Keegan Last night, a man named ‘Snyder’ called me. He told me to hurry to the hospital because you had fainted”

‘Vermont made the call? What about Keegan” thought Stella.

She closed her eyes. She had a splitting headache

‘I vaguely remember seeing Keegan before I fainted. But that’s all I remember. He was there, so what happened to him?’ she thought again.

“Where’s my phone, Felicity?”

“Right here.”

Felicity handed her the phone, “The screen’s cracked. I didn’t try switching it on, so I don’t know if it still works.”

Stella looked at her phone. Sure enough, there were multiple cracks on the screen.

‘It probably happened when I was fighting off those attackers last night,’ she thought.

Stella pressed the phone’s power button. Thankfully, everything was fine other than the cracked screen.

The moment she switched on her phone, a text message popped up. It was a text Daniel had sent her last night, telling her to go to his studio at nine in the morning for the tryout.

Stella pursed her lips and checked WhatsApp. All of her unread messages were from group chats, and none of them were from Keegan.

Stella clenched her fist. She felt disappointment slowly creep in, making her feel weak.

Her finger hovered over Keegan's number for a long time before she finally exited the call application. Then, she lifted her head and said to Felicity, "Did you drive here?"

Felicity nodded

"I need you to take me somewhere."

Felicity was shocked. "Now?"

"Mhm."

On the way to the studio, Felicity learned that Stella was going for a tryout Daniel had invited her to. At first, Felicity was ecstatic, but she turned a little disappointed when she heard that it was a minor role.

"When they see a face like yours play a minor role, even the audience will wonder if the director is blind."

Stella smiled. "I'm happy to play even a minor role as long as I can act. After taking my first step, only then can I take my second, then my third..."

"Your attitude has become really positive. Two years ago, I advised you to act, but you always had so many worries. You thought you were incapable. You were worried that you couldn't speak in front of the camera, worried that the Kane family would disagree, and even had a fight with Keegan because of this. You worried that you couldn't do your best and would end up embarrassed. So I told you to be a full-time wife. But then, you said you were worried that you'd be detached from society for too long and couldn't catch up to Keegan. Then, your distance from him would grow farther and farther. After hearing you now, are you not worried about these things anymore?"

Stella lowered her gaze.

"What's the use of worrying? Nothing will change because of my worries, and my worrying won't make me better. Instead, it'll make me sink deeper into that bizarre circle. Every time people tell me that I've married well in that tone of theirs, I actually feel agitated. I know that most times, they're just making conversation, and these people just think I'm lucky for marrying into the Kane family. However, things like luck don't last a lifetime. One day, if I fall from the top, even more people will see me make a fool of myself. Right now, I'm working hard to grab onto things I can hold onto, so I can climb upward. I just don't want to embarrass myself too much when I make my exit. I also want him to understand that I'm willing to let him take care of me, not because I can only rely on him."

Chapter 157

Felicity understood who the "him" was referring to.

Single people, like Felicity, obviously could not understand the thoughts of someone deeply in love like Stella. However, she was still happy seeing her best friend regain her confidence and positivity.

The car arrived at the destination shortly. When Stella went inside, she thought she had gotten the wrong address. The so-called studio did not even have a storefront and only had a glass sliding door.

On the door was the word "Wood" with a missing letter

Felicity whispered to Stella, "Did Daniel get scammed by the company? Why does his studio look so lousy?"

Truth be told, it was not that lousy. However, for someone as reputable as Daniel, the studio seemed a little too plain.

The two entered, and there was no receptionist by the door. While the studio was relatively spacious, there seemed to be few people there.

Stella approached one of the people and asked, "Excuse me. Is director Daniel Wood around?"

The person was holding a stack of documents. She pushed her glasses up her nose and gave Stella a once-over. "He isn't here. Why are you looking for him?"

"Mr. Wood called me and asked me to come for a tryout. We scheduled it for nine-thirty."

"A tryout?" The person frowned.

She continued, "Try out for what? Why haven't I heard him mention it?"

Stella said, "Mr. Wood contacted me last night. Perhaps he hadn't had the chance to mention it."

"Then, which movie are you trying out for?"

"The Palace."

"That's impossible!" the person immediately exclaimed.

"All the roles in that movie have already been decided, so how could you try out for them? Besides, your face is unfamiliar, and this is the first time I've seen you. Which company sent you through the backdoor?"

Stella tried to keep a good temper. "I'm a newcomer, and I have taken part in the production team's auditions before. Perhaps you haven't seen it."

"What did you audition for?"

"The Beauty."

The person froze. Then, she scrutinized Stella once more.

"Mr. Wood never gives second chances. How could a newbie like you be capable of getting one?"

Stella smiled good-naturedly. "Maybe Mr. Wood finds my looks suitable."

The person snorted quietly. "The drama we're shooting is a serious one. Your looks are too unnatural. Perhaps you could still earn money if you consider acting in idol dramas."

Before Stella could respond, Felicity lost it.

"Your chin looks like an awl, yet you're ridiculing others for looking unnatural? Are you allergic to naturally pretty people? Go and see a doctor. If this face has gotten any plastic surgery, then I'll change my last name to yours!"

The woman was instantly humiliated and angered by Felicity's words. She pointed at Felicity and said, "You're so rude!"

"I'm rude?" Felicity was so furious, even Stella could not hold her back.

Felicity continued, "We were only asking you for directions. Tell us if you're willing, but if you're not, shut your mouth! What did you mean when you said Stella got in through the backdoor and has unnatural looks? Why did you ask that? Is it because, in your eyes, all good-looking people had to have surgery and got their positions through sneaky tricks?"

The woman obviously did not expect Felicity to be this eloquent. She instantly turned red in anger and pointed to the door.

"Get out! I don't want to talk to ill-mannered people like you!" she said in a trembling voice.

The sounds of the argument startled Daniel, who was in the office. When he came out and saw the situation, he frowned and asked, "What's the matter? Why are you all fighting?"

The woman immediately ran over to him and complained, "Mr. Woods, where'd you find these people? They're so insolent! I merely asked them a few questions, and they started yelling at me. I've worked with many actors, but I've never met any as rude as her!"

## Chapter 158

That woman lied through her teeth!

Stella pulled Felicity back just as she was about to speak up.

"Director Wood, I thought you forgot about today's audition since this lady over here said you weren't coming just now."

The woman's heart stopped and hurriedly wove an excuse for herself. "When did you come, Director Woods? I asked Cad, and he said you weren't in."

Daniel's gaze took in the three of them, and he said faintly, "Come with me." Daniel took them to a larger office and asked the woman who had quarreled with them to step outside. with him.

Once the two got out, Felicity immediately took out her phone. Stella saw her checking her social media and murmured, "What are you finding?"

Felicity replied, "The woman just now looks familiar, but I can't remember where I've seen her. Let me check their group photos."

She

found the picture and exclaimed, "So, it was her!"

"Who?"

"Kelly Harper."

Stella narrowed her brows. "This name sounds familiar

"She directed that brainless drama, Secret Sweetheart, where you voice-acted in with Bella. That overhyped corny drama! She debuted in an idol drama, yet she looks down on it. How funny is that!"

Hearing Felicity's explanation, Stella realized that Kelly Harper's name has indeed appeared in many films and television dramas. "Why's she here with Daniel?"

"Not sure. There are rumors that Kelly's husband is powerful. Her dramas' in the early days. were trash, but she could always pull in sponsorships. She bought some famous

novel copyright when IP dramas went viral and got some trending actors to play out the script. She's made a fortune with it and has since been in the limelight for two years. Now I kind of quarreling with her. What if she makes things hard for you?"

regret

Stella seemed rather calm. "What's bound to happen will happen eventually. If she really views me badly, whether you talk back today or not, something will happen in the future too. Let's just wait and see."

Felicity was doubtful, but then she realized no matter how powerful Kelly's husband was, he could not be more powerful than the Kane family in Rivera. She calmed down, realizing that Keegan would never let people bully his wife. After a few minutes, Daniel, Kelly, and three other people entered the room. A younger-looking man handed a few papers to Stella. Daniel said, "You have five minutes. We'll start once you go through the script."

Stella was stunned to find that she had got the script for the Queen. "The Queen is the villain of the story. I heard a famous veteran actress was going to get this role. Why did Daniel give me the Queen's script?"

Stella raised her head but saw that the people were playing with their phones or chatting among themselves. She suppressed her doubts and quickly memorized the lines. When the time was up, she said to Daniel, "I'm ready."

Daniel gestured to the boy who had handed her the script. The boy immediately understood his silent instructions and started to read the narration. This scene was after the concubine's scene ended. In order to get the King to trust her and let her take care of the Prince, the Queen deliberately plotted to make the Prince fall into the lake. Then she would jump into the lake in the cold midnight to save the Prince.

What was challenging about this scene was that the Queen, in the eyes of the others, was still a gentle wife and loving mother. Stella should not act too exaggeratedly and reveal the Queen's intentions too early, but at the same time, show enough details to foreshadow the plot twist. Therefore, the audience would feel horror when everything was revealed at the end.

## Chapter 159

The Queen was one of the most brilliant characters in this drama. She bore disgrace and a heavy burden. On one hand, she had to endure the pain of sharing her husband with other women. On the other hand, she had to be generous as the mother of a nation. She could not bring shame to the palace even though she was in bereavement.

She would have to always keep in mind her position, reminding herself that the King could not love people to numb herself. She kept her feelings at bay until she discovered

that the King had fallen in love with the female lead. The belief the Queen had hung on to for many years collapsed, and the hatred from betrayal rushed in. She loved him but could not get him. Love to hate was the most significant charm of this character.

Stella took a deep breath and got into character. Once she started talking, the people playing with their phones stopped and watched her. Stella was completely immersed in the role. With her every move, even without any props, everyone could tell what she was doing. Stella delivered her lines clearly, and her emotions were just right, especially with how she dealt with the details. Her smile, when she put the Prince to sleep, would make people shudder when they think of it carefully. However, that same smile seemed normal to others who did not know she was the villain.

After Stella's performance ended, the room went silent Daniel cleared his throat and said, "Tell me what you think about it."

The others exchanged looks and decided the assistant director should give his opinion. The assistant director cleared his throat "She did a pretty good job acting, but she's too young She might not be able to handle the character

Daniel held his chin with his fingers and stayed silent for a long while. It was quite the problem. Their original plan was to let a thirty plus actress play the Queen's role. A calm and experienced face at that age was naturally filled with stories. Stella was too pretty for this role People would first notice her face the moment she stood there. It was a great advantage for an actress, but also a horrible one. Her beauty would make the audience ignore her acting skills. When Stella was in school, her teacher once commented on her appearance. The teacher said that she might use her appearance as an advantage. Yet she would also have a hard time advancing in her acting career with this pretty face limiting her roles.

Stella was not convinced by her teacher's comment. While everyone was busy falling in love during college, she was busy studying and taking care of her mother. However, she married Keegan before she even had the time to prove her worth.

Stella was much calmer now that this point had been rehashed again. Daniel stayed silent for a moment before speaking. "You heard her do part just now. Did you think she's too young for this role?"

Everyone went silent once Daniel said this. The way Stella said her lines was impeccable. Whether it was the articulation, vocalization, or tone of voice, Stella had grasped them all very well. In terms of details, she was even more in-depth than the person who tried before her. But obviously, Stella was not the desired actress in these people's hearts.

Then, another person voiced out. "I saw her resume just now. She has no prior work. How could we use a newbie for such an important role? Isn't it too big of a risk?"

At that, Kelly spoke up. "Director Wood, I don't think we should let someone like her play such a pivotal role. This character has almost the same amount of scenes as the female lead."

Daniel glanced at her. "Do you have a better option?"

Kelly immediately replied, "Bella Young. We've worked with her before. This actress has fame and her acting skills aren't bad either. She's also very interested in this role. I think Bella should try it out."

## Chapter 160

Stella was shocked. 'There were rumors that Bella was cast as the female lead of this drama. Or was that not confirmed?'

Felicity was confused too. She heard the rumor from a group chat when a few people shared it." Some said Bella was going to act in Daniel's drama. Yet it was nothing after such a big fuss! Come to think of it, she was probably hyping it on her own and setting off the atmosphere. If she's not selected in the end, her fans will blame the production crew And she'll gain another wave of popularity. What a great tactic!

Daniel pursed his lips after hearing who Kelly had recommended. "I've seen her work before"

Kelly was delighted. "What do you think of her? If you think she's alright, I could contact her to come over immediately "

Daniel replied coolly, "It's all techniques."

Kelly thought Daniel was complimenting Bella until she heard him speak again "She has no emotions. Her eyes were not even red after her tears were flowing

No matter how dense Kelly was, she understood Daniel was being sarcastic Kelly could not stand the embarrassment Another assistant director stepped up to smooth things over "Well, it's an idol drama. It was for the fans. Maybe she didn't even use her full potential."

Daniel raised his eyebrow. "She depends on her fans to support herself, yet she produces such trash for the fans and slacks off on her job?"

That assistant director choked on his laugh and stopped talking. Daniel was famous for his sharp tongue in this industry, but his shows were all top-tier Therefore, even if his words often offended people, many people were still willing to collaborate with him. Daniel's name ensured quality. All the dramas he directed were hits.

Kelly was different. Her scripts focused on the capital market. She would hire celebrities to play her drama. During the drama's broadcast, she would spend a lot to promote and aim for the fans' money.

It's the nature of humans to start gaining fame after having enough money. The highest rating of the dramas Kelly produced were all not more than 5, and an average of 3.5 on a well-known domestic website. The quality of her dramas was horrible, even though she shot idol dramas.

Therefore, the netizens gave her the name Queen of Horrible Dramas. Kelly was eager to get rid of that label. So, her husband spent a lot of money on this drama to get her the position of assistant director. She thought everyone would give ground to her, and she would still have the highest authority in the production crew as usual. She never thought Daniel would make her look bad and reject all her suggestions. He even put her on the spot in front of everyone. Kelly hated his guts.

She held back her displeasure and asked, "If Director Wood has already decided, why bother asking us to come here?"

Her underlying intent was to accuse Daniel of laying down the law. He was overbearing and dictatorial.

Daniel glanced at her. "If I didn't call you over and watch the signing in person, how can I be sure that someone else would not use their power to secretly switch my actress out?"

The crowd looked at one another after Daniel made this statement. Kelly had a ghastly expression. She pursed her lips and remained silent.

"She's the one." Daniel paused and asked Felicity, who was watching over Stella's shoulder. "Are you her manager? Which company are you from?"

"I'm from Bona Film. I'm kind of her manager now," Felicity answered.

"Kind of?"

Stella explained, "I have yet to sign a managing company."

Daniel was quite surprised. But he could more or less understand her situation as he remembered she had the same occupation as Robin.

"Go get yourself an assistant, so you'll have someone to help you run errands during the production. Don't delay the shooting process because of this."

Stella was thrilled, but she managed to keep a straight face and replied, "Understood."

Kelly did not want to stay any longer. While Stella read through the contract, Kelly left and slammed the door behind her.

## Chapter 161

A few other people chatted with Daniel for a while before leaving. Soon, there were only Daniel and his assistant in the conference room. This contract was a standard template in the industry, but they had added two other conditions to Party B's obligations. One was to re-register a new Facebook account during the contract period to cooperate with the crew's publicity activities. The other was to not accept any other work during the promotion period. These two conditions were clearly addressing Stella's previous occupation.

Dusk Galaxy was her trump card, and it should not be exposed that early Stella had no opinion on the conditions. She had not taken any voice acting jobs for nearly half a year. Felicity pulled her aside just before Stella could sign the contract and whispered, "Stella, isn't the pay a little too low?"

The pay in the contract was based on the entire drama. One drama before tax was two million, and the shooting period was one hundred and twenty days. The character had quite some scenes. According to the market price, the pay was indeed too low. After paying for taxes, the fee to hire an assistant, and some daily expenses on the set, Stella would be left with little to no money after the drama. She might also need to spend some during the promotion period. Stella lowered her voice. "Let's get on board first. We're not expecting to use this money for the rest of our lives. What if this drama makes me popular? If it works out, we'll never need to worry about getting new jobs."

'Do these two think I'm deaf?' Daniel slowly sipped his tea. The conference room made echoes. On top of that, there were only four of them in it. He could hear them talking, regardless of how low their voices were.

Felicity thought Stella's reasoning made sense. They had to have a long-term vision. Hence, they quickly signed the contract.

Stella felt the heavy burden in her heart ease a bit. She reached out her hand to Daniel. "Director Wood, I'll appreciate your guidance in the future."

Daniel shook her hand and said, "We're in the same boat from now on. There's no need to be so formal."

Stella was speechless. She should really stop her habit of muttering in front of other people in the future. The assistant took away the contract and handed her the complete printed version. of the script.

"If you're free at home, you better read the entire script once. This character is essential to the drama. Don't blame me for being harsh if you ever drop the ball."

Stella nodded and thought to herself, "Who could be harsher than Keegan?"

Exiting the building, Felicity clamored to buy a lottery ticket. In her words, all Stella's Christmases came at once since she got her place in this drama and even changed to a better role than expected. Felicity said she could take some of Stella's luck, buy a lottery ticket, and win the grand prize.

Stella was in the same mood, so she went with her. While the two were choosing their lot, Stella's phone rang, and she saw it was Vermont. She informed Felicity and went out to answer the phone.

"Stella, where have you been all morning?"

"I came out for some work." Stella paused. "Can I help you?"

"No, not me. It's Keegan. If you don't come now, you might never see him again.

Her heart tightened for a moment. She pursed her lips. "What does that mean?"

"I meant it literally. Last night, Keegan was beaten up by those two bastards, and now he's in intensive care. The doctor said it's quite serious."

## Chapter 162

Stella bit her lip. "Don't exaggerate Get him on the phone.

"Stella, how could I lie about this? You can call him if you don't believe me He's unconscious. How could he be on the phone? The two bastards yesterday were ruffians. They had knives and were ruthless with their strikes. If the police hadn't come earlier, Keegan's life would have been gone. I have never seen that much blood before

Stella was now slightly panicked. She was unconscious yesterday, so she did not know what had happened. When she woke in the morning, her sleeve had red brown spots. She thought it was coffee at first, but maybe it was blood.

"Stella, come over now I'm scared he won't make it "And then the phone call disconnected. When Stella called again, the phone was occupied Keegan's phone was off, and it wrenched her heart

From the store, Felicity called Stella Stella regained her senses and went inside to pay She turned her head to Felicity and said, "Something happened back home I have to go back. Take your time to choose I'll contact you later

Felicity saw that Stella was a little pale and hurriedly asked, "What happened? Is it bad? Do you need me to go with your

Stella waved her hand, saying, "Talk to you later" Stella stopped a cab at the entrance and rushed to the hospital. On the way there, her phone rang again. She thought it was Vermont, but she frowned when she saw it was her father. She was already in a messy state, so she put her phone on silent and let it vibrate

Once she reached the hospital, she ran into Dahlia and Aurora. There was another person with them, her father, Albert. Before Stella could figure out why the three of them were together, Aurora marched toward her and questioned her, "Where's my brother? How is he?"

Stella pressed her lips together. "I'm not sure. I just arrived."

Aurora was furious. "You just arrived? So that means my brother was alone in the hospital the whole night yesterday? Where were you? How was he hurt? You didn't call him when he didn't. come home the whole night? When your family of parasites needs money, you'll think of my brother, but where are you when he's in trouble?"

Albert was uncomfortable hearing this. "How could you say that? Keegan is my son-in-law. I entrusted my daughter to him. How could I not be concerned about him?"

"You're concerned about him?" Aurora sneered. "I'm sure you can't wait for something bad to happen to him. That way, your daughter could inherit my brother's property. Do you think I don't know what you people are thinking? Let me tell you this, if anything happens to my brother, she will not get a single penny from the Kane family."

Albert was enraged. His expression was ghastly when he saw that Dahlia was silent. "Dahlia, now is not the time for accusations. We have to check Keegan's situation first."

Dahlia looked him in the eye coldly. She turned her head back and said emotionlessly, "Stop We should head up and see your brother "

They took the elevator to the seventh floor and reached ward number 709. Just as they were

about to enter, the nurse on duty called out to them. "What are you doing?"

Stella replied, "We're the family of the patient in 709. How is he?"

"You're his family?" The nurse assessed them and said coldly, "You're too late. He's gone."

Stella's heart stuttered. "Gone? What does that mean?"

"He passed away just ten minutes ago. If you had come any later, he'd already be pushed into the morgue." She pushed the door open, and a person was lying on the bed

with a white cloth covering his whole body. The whole room smelled of medicine. It was suffocating.

Dahlia turned white while Aurora shook her head in denial with a look of disbelief. "Impossible. There's no way my brother's gone."

Stella stood stiffly in place, subconsciously taking a step back. Aurora pushed her from behind, and Stella fell forward, kneeling on the side of the bed. Her wrist hit the armrest of the room, and she grunted out from the piercing pain. Tears instantly welled up in her eyes.

Albert had a mournful look on his face. "How could a perfectly healthy person just be gone like

that?"

Stella's knees and wrist hurt. She could not hold back her tears, thinking about the corpse under the white cloth.

Chapter 163

Just then, a familiar voice sounded from the door. "What are you doing?"

Stella paused and turned her head slowly.

At the door of the ward, Keegan was wearing a hospital gown, and his arm was in a sling. He looked at her expressionlessly, and Vermont was next to him in astonishment.

Stella was speechless.

"Keegan!" Aurora rushed over. "You scared me!"

After everyone asked, they found out Keegan was in Room 709 formerly. But the room had poor lighting, which he disliked. So, he switched to 704 in the morning. However, the hospital system still displayed 709 because they had yet to update the system. Hence, a big mistake was made.

Finally, a little color was back on Dahlia's cheek. "What happened to your arm?"

Vermont answered before Keegan could speak, "He helped the police to catch some guys and was accidentally struck by one of the bad guys last night. He was seriously injured and needed seven stitches!"

'Seven stitches...' Stella felt a little sorry suddenly

“Why didn’t you make a call when something this big happened? If Aurora hadn’t seen Vermont’s picture in the group, we wouldn’t have known about it until now!”

Stella clasped her hands tightly in each other.

Keegan said flatly, “It’s just a minor injury. I didn’t intend to let you know. He’s the nosy one.” Vermont took a photo of Keegan lying on the hospital bed while he slept. He planned to send it to their buddies’ group chat, but it ended up in a different group. Someone quickly took a screenshot and sent it to another group. It happened to be seen by Aurora.

Dahlia snapped. “Is it still a minor injury after seven stitches?”

Vermont became a mediator immediately as he was afraid Keegan would quarrel with his mom, “Why don’t we go back to the ward and talk it out? The body is still here. Can we respect the deceased?”

It was true that this place was unsuitable for conversation.

Keegan glanced at Stella and saw that she was not moving. He pursed his lips. “How long are you going to kneel?”

Stella was speechless.

‘You think I want this? My knees hurt!’

Aurora snapped. “It’s so embarrassing. You mourn before identifying. Do you really wish something to happen to my brother?”

Albert explained, “Concern cause confusion. Stella freaked out because she thought something happened to Keegan.”

Aurora wanted to say something else, but Dahlia interrupted her. “Let’s go back to the ward and talk.” Then, she remained silent.

Aurora wanted to help Keegan, but he avoided her hand. He walked up to Stella and stretched out his uninjured hand.

Stella looked up at his fingers. ‘Except for his arm being in a sling, Keegan’s in good condition. How could he be dying as Vermont said?’

But when Stella thought of his arm taking seven stitches because of her, the feeling of guilt rose again.

From Keegan's point of view, he saw Stella's eyes were red with tears hanging from the corners of her eyes, and the tip of her nose was red too. She broke people's hearts with her cute sniffles, making him restless.

"Are you planning to do the rites for the first seven days after death for this person?" As soon as Keegan spoke, most of the guilt in Stella's heart disappeared.

Stella thought viciously, 'Keegan was probably beaten because of his loose tongue. It has nothing to do with me!'

## Chapter 164

Dahlia, Aurora, and Albert surrounded Keegan's hospital bed. There was no place for Stella at all.

Vermont said, "Aurora, go get some warm water Keegan hasn't taken his medicine yet.

Aurora frowned. "Isn't someone standing there 3\*"

"Hey! You."

Vermont wanted to say something else, but Stella took the empty glass and said flatly, "I'll do

it "

Stella just did not want to stay here with these people

As soon as the door was closed, Dahlia asked, "What happened last night

"Nothing," Keegan said succinctly "I ran into a few troublemakers while drinking, and there was a conflict

"What kind of conflict can hurt others in this way? Who hurt you? Where are they now

"Mom, I'll handle this by myself So leave it alone

Dahlia was upset "How can I leave it alone? Look how seriously you were hurt. It happened last night, and I only found out at noon today' If someone can take good care of you, I can rest assured. But you stay in the hospital alone for the whole night Nobody is taking care of you How can you make me feel at ease?"

Stella pursed her lips. Obviously, these words were blaming her As a wife, she knew nothing when something happened to her husband. That was ridiculous!

Later, she heard Keegan say, "I didn't tell her She has hematophobia. I feel bad when she cries.

Stella was speechless, but her mood lifted slightly all of a sudden. Then, she went to the water dispenser with the water glass.

Dahlia said, "You feel bad for this? Don't you think about your grandma? Will she feel good. when she sees you hurt like this? Do I feel good about it?"

"Keegan, why are you still on her side at this time? If she really cares about you, she should be here earlier!" said Aurora,

Keegan frowned. "Don't add fuel to the fire!"

Aurora shrank her neck.

Dahlia frowned, "What's wrong with Aurora's word? You spoiled her!"

Albert also said, "Keegan, my daughter has been spoiled since she was a child. She might be out of order when she does something. Your mom's right. You have to give her a lesson when necessary. Don't always spoil her. She's already married. How can she not bother about anything?"

Vermont's jaw dropped. "Is this what a dad should say? What does "give a lesson when necessary" mean? Is he encouraging domestic violence? Is Stella really his child?"

Aurora wanted to say something else, but Dahlia interrupted her. "Let's go back to the ward and talk." Then, she remained silent.

Aurora wanted to help Keegan, but he avoided her hand. He walked up to Stella and stretched out his uninjured hand.

Stella looked up at his fingers. 'Except for his arm being in a sling, Keegan's in good condition. How could he be dying as Vermont said?'

But when Stella thought of his arm taking seven stitches because of her, the feeling of guilt rose again.

From Keegan's point of view, he saw Stella's eyes were red with tears hanging from the corners of her eyes, and the tip of her nose was red too. She broke people's hearts with her cute sniffles, making him restless.

Are you planning to do the rites for the first seven days after death for this person?" As soon as Keegan spoke, most of the guilt in Stella's heart disappeared.

Stella thought viciously, 'Keegan was probably beaten because of his loose tongue. It has nothing to do with me!'

Dahlia, Aurora, and Albert surrounded Keegan's hospital bed. There was no place for Stella at

all.

Vermont said, "Aurora, go get some warm water. Keegan hasn't taken his medicine yet."

Aurora frowned. "Isn't someone standing there?"

"Hey! You..."

Vermont wanted to say something else, but Stella took the empty glass and said flatly, "I'll do it."

Stella just did not want to stay here with these people.

As soon as the door was closed, Dahlia asked, "What happened last night?"

"Nothing," Keegan said succinctly. "I ran into a few troublemakers while drinking, and there was a conflict."

"What kind of conflict can hurt others in this way? Who hurt you? Where are they now?"

"Mom, I'll handle this by myself. So leave it alone."

Dahlia was upset. "How can I leave it alone? Look how seriously you were hurt. It happened last night, and I only found out at noon today! If someone can take good care of you, I can rest assured. But you stay in the hospital alone for the whole night. Nobody is taking care of you. How can you make me feel at ease?"

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Vermont's jaw dropped. "Is this what a dad should say? What does "give a lesson when necessary" mean? Is he encouraging domestic violence? Is Stella really his child?"

Keegan glanced at him and said coldly, "How did you know I was in the hospital?"

Dahlia and Aurora came because they saw the picture in the group. But how did Albert know it and turn up with them?

Albert was dissatisfied with Keegan's cold tone. However, he did not dare get angry. His eyes flickered, and he said, "I want to discuss something with Dahlia. But I knew about it when I arrived, so I came with her."

Keegan was disinterested in what they were discussing. So, he turned to Dahlia and said, "

Mom, I won't be going to the company for a few days. When grandma asks, tell her I went on a trip with Stella."

"Your grandma can't be bluffed easily."

"Just say we went on a honeymoon. She'll believe it."

Dahlia pursed her lips and stopped talking with a sullen face.

After a while, the nurse came in and said Keegan needed to change the dressing. So Keegan asked them to go back.

Chapter 165

After exiting the ward, Albert stopped Dahlia. "Dahlia, you look great lately"

Dahlia replied without emotion, "I'm so-so."

"I asked Stella to give you the white truffle a while back. Have you tried it? How is it?"

Dahlia frowned. "White truffle? I didn't get it."

Albert looked surprised. "That's impossible. I handed it to Stella and asked her to give it to you. How can you not get it?"

"What do you mean?" Aurora raised her voice. "Do you mean my mom denied after accepting your gift? She has all the good things. Is the Kane family short of your piece of junk? Don't think the Jewell family can raise their standing by relying on Stella just because she married Keegan. She's nobody in the Kane family!"

Albert's expression changed, looking unhappy.

After Aurora finished, Dahlia said lightly, "Aurora, how can you talk to your elders this way?" Aurora snorted coldly. She did not take him seriously at all.

Albert, a middle-aged man in his early fifties, was a little embarrassed to be scolded by a girl like this.

Dahlia spoke. "My daughter is blunt by nature. So, please don't take her words seriously." Albert forced a smile. "It's okay. How can I argue with a kid?"

"Actually, you don't need to waste your energy on me. Keegan has a sense of propriety with the company's affairs. I don't work in the company, so I can't say anything."

These words made Albert speechless for a moment. He then said with a smile, "Dahlia, you overthink it. I didn't mean that. You take care of Stella after she married into the Kane family. As her father, I gave you a gift out of selfishness. I hope you guys have a harmonious relationship."

Dahlia glanced at him, "It said a married daughter is no longer a member of her

parent's household. Naturally, I'll treat her well as long as she's willing to belong to the Kane family. I'm just worried that she can't get the point."

These words were full of underlying messages. Albert's face seemed to change with every word.

There was a uniformed policeman getting water at the water dispenser. So, Stella had to stand aside and wait. After the policeman finished, he turned around and paused when he saw her He nodded to her and left with the water glass.

Stella was a little baffled. After getting some water, she saw Felicity had sent her a message [Ten numbers were chosen. Hope we can win the jackpot']

Two lottery tickets with the selected numbers printed on them were on the bottom.

Stella sent an emoji that said, "May Fortune Smile On You" and put away her phone. Then, she went to the duty room. She planned to ask about Keegan's condition.

The nurse in the duty room was the one in charge of Keegan. She told Stella about Keegan's condition in detail. "Yes, the wound is quite deep, but it's okay. He can be discharged in the afternoon. Take good care of it at home. The stitches can be removed within ten days to half a month. It'll be fine once the scab falls off. Just be careful, and don't let the wound run into contact with water during this period."

Stella was still worried. "He bled a lot. Can he really go home immediately?"

"It wasn't a lot." While talking, another nurse came in and said, "Zoe, the police took away the patient in bed 32 after he woke up. Ask someone to clean up the ward. I'm off work."

"So fast? The patient in bed 32 was seriously injured. Why did the police take him away? What was his offense?"

The nurse took off her scrubs and said, "I heard from the person on duty last night that he drugged a girl in a bar and was beaten. He also had an accomplice who had a worsened condition. His nose was broken. He had an operation last night and wasn't awake yet. Before the morning shift, the wives of these two people came to the hospital and made trouble. You haven't reached at that time, but I met them. One of the women was pregnant. She was in tears, shouting and pulling the police, saying they wronged good people. The surveillance was filmed clearly, but they just don't believe it. What do you think these women are expecting?" "That's why so many policemen came to the eighth floor in the early morning. So that's the case? What about the people who beat them? Wouldn't the police also arrest them?"

Stella's heart stopped. She thought of the police officer she saw just now. "Is he here to arrest Keegan?"

## Chapter 166

Stella could not even ask more questions. She turned around and ran toward the ward.

After opening the door of the ward, only Keegan was there. No policemen were seen. Rather, Keegan was shocked by the sound of her pushing the door. He frowned and said, "Reckless."

Stella was relieved. She unscrewed the water bottle and cooled the water for him with the two paper cups she found.

The water she just took was hot. Keegan was hard to serve. He disliked the mixture of cold and hot water and only drank water that cooled naturally

Stella tried to trick Keegan by mixing some cold water into the hot water for him once before. However, he only took a sip and refused to take another

The hospital did not have a device that helped to cool the water down quickly So, Stella had to use this method to cool it for him.

Keegan looked at her movements and asked abruptly, "Where did you go this morning?"

"To buy a lottery ticket."

Keegan was speechless. Then, he asked, "Where's the lottery ticket?"

Stella set aside the paper cups and showed Keegan the two photos she had received on her phone. "I took a long time to choose it. I think I can win the jackpot."

Keegan glanced at it. The cracks on the phone caught his eyes. "Everybody who buys a lottery ticket thinks they're going to win," he said.

"We have to have dreams."

"That's delusional."

Stella pouted. "People like you who were born into a rich family don't understand the meaning of the lottery naturally."

Suddenly, Keegan said, "Winning the lottery is known as a windfall gain. If you win the lottery, isn't it marital property? I'll also get half of it, right? In this sense, it seems to have some meaning."

Stella was shocked.

'Keegan, you suck! Even if I win the lottery, I'll claim the prize after divorce!'

"Take

your

medicine."

Stella handed the cup to Keegan after the water cooled. Keegan took it but not the medicine. He looked at her.

Stella did not understand what he wanted. "What's wrong?"

"Do I still have hands to take medicine?" Keegan snapped.

Stella was speechless. She opened the prepared medicine on the table, put it in her palm, and held it to Keegan's mouth.

Keegan opened his mouth, and she put the medicine into his mouth. His dry lips brushed

against her palm, and she could feel his breath on her hand. It was warm and itchy, as if scratching her heart.

Stella withdrew her hand uncomfortably and stroked her palm lightly a few times. Suddenly she thought, 'Keegan can get the medicine first, then the water. The medicine and the water don't have to be taken together. Did Keegan hurt his brain instead of his arm?'

Keegan seemed to fail to notice her reaction. He took a sip of water and swallowed the medicine.

Stella was thinking about what the nurse on duty said. After hesitating, she asked, "I met a police officer at the water dispenser just now."

Keegan closed his eyes and rested his mind. He did not even lift his eyelids.

Stella said again, "Didn't the police come to you?"

Keegan's eyelids were still closed, but he responded to her. "Why should they look for me?"

Stella was lost for words for a moment. "Didn't you beat someone?"

Keegan opened his eyes. "You think the police are here to arrest me?"

"They will have questions for you, right?"

"They asked in the morning," Keegan paused and added, "when you were buying the lottery

ticket."

Stella was stunned into silence.

## Chapter 167

“Besides, I was defending myself, not beating people up. Your drug test results have been submitted to the police, too. The lawyer has full authority to deal with it for me,” said Keegan.

Stella still could not figure it out. Those people had knives. How could I dare shout if they threatened me with knives when they abducted me?”

“Come here.” Keegan’s deep voice interrupted her thoughts.

Stella raised her eyes. “What’s up?” Even as she said so, she walked to Keegan’s bedside.

Keegan frowned. “Head down. Come closer I won’t bite

Stella pursed her lips, bent over and leaned in. “What the hell are you going to ?” Before she could finish, she felt something cold on her lips.

Keegan lowered his eyes and gently applied the ointment on the wound on her lower lip with his index finger. That wound was created when she bit herself last night to remain conscious. The ointment was ice cold, but it seemed to carry Keegan’s warm love and tenderness with the temperature of his fingertips.

Suddenly, Stella wanted to cry with the feeling of being aggrieved when she thought of what had happened last night.

“Your lip’s swollen. It’s like a sausage. Don’t you feel it yourself?” Keegan successfully made Stella’s bad mood disappear as soon as he spoke

Stella slapped his hand away and glared at him. “Don’t look at it if you think it’s ugly!”

“I’ve seen you uglier than this, and I’m used to it.”

Stella pursed her lips, ‘What Keegan should hurt most is his mouth!’”

“Knock, knock.” Albert opened the door to the ward and carried a basket of fruit in his hand. after knocking on the door twice.

Stella stood up. “Dad, I thought you left.”

Albert said gently, “I was about to leave, but I saw that the fruits downstairs were quite fresh. I didn’t know what Keegan liked to eat, so I bought some. You can cut them for Keegan later.”

Stella responded and reached out to take it.

'It's ironic to say. I was sick as a child and wanted to eat the arctic roll. There was a shop that sold it opposite Albert's company. Even so, until I recovered from the illness, he didn't buy one for me. Keegan enjoyed the care I didn't even get from my dad.'

"Keegan, how do you feel now?"

Keegan said flatly, "Nothing. I'll be discharged from the hospital later."

"Go home and get some good rest. Ask Stella to make something for you if you want to eat anything"

Stella could not help but want to roll her eyes. 'If you want to kiss Keegan's ass, do it yourself! Why do you have to involve me?'

Keegan glanced at her and said, "I got it."

Albert said nothing again before he left. Then, he said, "Stella, come outside. Let's talk for a while."

Stella was surprised.

Albert strode toward the rooftop after coming out of the ward. Stella followed behind and asked, "Dad, what do you want to talk about with me?"

Albert stopped after he reached the rooftop. He turned his head and stared at her sullenly. "I asked you to give the white truffle to Dahlia last time. Did you give it to her?"

Stella nodded, "Yes."

As soon as she finished, Albert suddenly raised his hand and slapped her across the face. The slap was fast and hateful. Stella's ears buzzed, and her face burned in pain.

"Dahlia didn't receive anything at all. Who did you give it to?" Albert was furious when thinking of Aurora's humiliating words. "You feel you can live and work independently now. You also feel you can make up your mind about everything. You are so confident in telling lies. Don't forget who help you to marry into the Kane family!"

Stella's eyes were a bit blurry. She reached out and brushed the messy hair behind her ears. Then, she raised her eyes. "I didn't lie."

"You're still arguing!" Albert raised his hand as he spoke.

However, Stella was on guard this time. She grabbed his wrist directly, "Keegan is in the ward. If you touch me again, you'll know the consequences!"

Albert had no choice but to stop as soon as these words were spoken. He gritted his teeth and said, "You've grown capable of threatening your dad?"

## Chapter 168

Stella pushed his hand away and said, "You still remember that you're my dad? If you could believe in the words of strangers, why couldn't you believe in the words of your own daughter? If I had said I had sent the item, I would have already sent it. If you suffered humiliation from Dahlia, what makes you think you can throw them back at me?"

Albert did not believe her statement at all. "If she did receive the item, why would she have told me she didn't get it? Previously, we told you to mention the project at Cavalry City to Keegan, and you keep putting it off. Did you think that by having Keegan as your patron, the Jewell family would be pointless to you? Did you assume the wind would sweep away the yearly payment of millions of dollars for your mother's hospital bills? In the end, who were these things I told you to do for? If the Jewell family can't stand on its own two feet, do you think the Kane family would still respect you?!"

Albert spoke with so much grandiose as if the things he did were done for the sake of Stella and her mother.

'Does he think that the money and status he acquired through this means would make the Kane family think highly of him? The Kane family would only despise him more!' Stella thought.

"I have already said this. I have already sent the item. If you don't believe me, then it would be unnecessary for you to entrust me with any task in the future. In terms of ass kissing, I am definitely not as skilled as you are," Stella retorted.

"You..." Albert's anger flared up again. At the same time, a few people walked out into the balcony. He abruptly suppressed the words he was about to spit back.

Stella, on the other hand, just left.

In the sick ward, Vermont mentioned the recent incident of Stella crying due to having someone else mistaken for Keegan's funeral. He was rolling on the floor laughing.

Keegan furrowed his brows and said, "That's quite enough."

Vermont withheld his laughter and teased Keegan, "You are now considered to have fully experienced having someone crying at your funeral. How do you feel?"

"Not bad." Keegan glanced at him. "When you die, there might not be anyone who would genuinely cry for

you at your funeral.”

for you

Vermont was speechless and was suddenly unable to laugh anymore. Forget funerals. The last time he had an IV drip for a fever, he posted a picture to his social media. As a result, he had a group of his ex-girlfriends comment on it, saying: ‘He had it coming!’

“Is there any news from the police?” Keegan asked, going back to more serious matters.

“Initially, the guy they caught still argued and denied it. Once the surveillance tapes were shown, he admitted to everything. Including the incident last night, it was the third one this year. Those two bastards!”

The two of them were repeat offenders. According to their confession, the first time that both of them had done this was last year. Two of them met a drunk girl at a bar. Seeing that the girl was alone, they brought her to the hotel to be raped. After they had their way, they dumped

her in a secluded area with no surveillance. They went through a month on pins and needles and found nothing had happened, so they grew bolder. They frequently roamed through various bars to pick up drunk girls.

However, single ladies who were drunk at night were few, and they were afraid that they would be recognized when the girls sobered up from their drunkenness. Hence, they bought illegal drugs to lure the girl into their trap. These two scumbags were sure that the ladies would not report to the police due to their humiliation or the threat of public opinion. Thus, their modus operandi grew more outrageous. The consequences would have been grievous if they had been late by just a few minutes last night.

Vermont could still remember Stella’s expression when Keegan carried her out. It was the first time he saw Keegan’s poker face shatter. Thinking of this, he gave a playful smirk. “If Stella was really in trouble last night, would you have divorced her?”

Keegan’s movements froze. Then he gave Vermont a cold sidelong glance. “I would’ve killed you.”

Vermont had no words to say and could only reply, “How could you blame me? I’ve seen the both of you give each other the silent treatment for so long. I helped you both nurture your relationship from the kindness of my heart. Who knew those two maggots would appear?”

Chapter 169

His voice was getting smaller as he continued, and in the end, he shut up.

'Alright, who knew I would come up with such a crappy idea?' Vermont thought. As he was thinking, Stella returned.

Vermont knew how to read the room and immediately said, "Mrs. Kane, I have some business at my company and will be leaving first. You take good care of Keegan. If anything happens, you can call me anytime."

Keegan gave him a sidelong glance and then said, "How unfitting of you to leave empty. You can take the fruit basket with you."

"I'm not the patient. Why should I eat the fruits

"Vermont cut himself off. He suddenly

realized that Keegan was not letting him bring the fruits with him. This fellow was just using another way to subtly hint that Vermont had come empty-handed.

"I won't be taking the fruit basket. Mrs. Kane, you should keep this card. There are 500 thousand dollars in it. It's the payment that I promised you. The extra will be counted as compensation for Keegan's lost labor and reparations for your mental health since both of you had to encounter such a terrible incident because of me."

Stella looked at it but did not accept it. "My husband's daily income is quite high. It would take at least a week's rest after his elbow had suffered such a hit, right, hubby?" She was implying that more money is needed.

Keegan was pleased by her calling him hubby and lifted his gaze slowly to look at Vermont. "It depends on the recovery of the injury. At a minimum, a week while at most, half a month."

Stella then gave an 'I told you so' look at Vermont. Vermont's lips twitched. These two were definitely made for each other. Under these circumstances, they can still join together to scam him out of his money. To think that he wanted to help Keegan before this. Where did he need his help? Both husband and wife have already reconciled, and the first person they want to deal with is him.

Actually, Stella did not want to screw him over on purpose. She was slightly resentful of Vermont. He was at the scene last night; how could he watch Keegan be slashed by someone like that? Hence, she made him lose a bit of money, or else she would not be able to swallow her anger.

Based on Keegan's stance, if he did not lose this bit of money, he would probably make him pay it back in double. Vermont had always been sensible, so he quickly admitted defeat. He immediately signed a two-million-dollar check and gave it to Stella. "It was thoughtless of me, Mrs. Kane. You can keep the check and cash it in at any bank in Rivera. This should be enough for your husband's lost wages, right?"

Stella took the check and grabbed the card he had given previously. "Although it's still lacking, we're friends. This should be enough. Being too calculative would hurt our relationship."

Vermont was at a loss for words. 'Just die in chains, you stingy wife and husband!' He cursed in his head.

After Vermont left, Keegan said, "Two million and five hundred thousand doesn't sound good."

||

Stella initially thought Keegan was complaining that she was too greedy for taking the check and the card. The next second, she heard him say, "You should have gotten five million in total."

Stella was speechless. She definitely had thought of Keegan too kindly, but he was actually even more ruthless than she was. Keegan said casually, "He got the bracelet for less than 20 million."

Stella, at that moment, felt that Vermont was the most wicked person they knew!

"Never mind, since it is a windfall" Stella then gave the check to Keegan. "I'll have the bank card, and I'll give you the check."

Keegan did not accept it and looked at the left side of her face. He furrowed his brows. "What's wrong with your face?"

When Stella entered, the right side of her face was always facing him, so he did not notice it. When she passed the check, she turned her whole body around, and the handprint on her left cheek became more evident. Stella pulled some of the hair on her left side to block the handprint and said softly, "Nothing's wrong."

Chapter 170

"You should grab the check quickly before I regret it," Stella said.

Keegan stared at her for a moment and said, "Answer me this one question, and the check is yours."

Stella lifted her gaze. "What?"

"What did Albert discuss with you?"

Stella's movements froze, and she pursed her lips. "Your mother didn't receive the white truffles. You could have just refused to help me if you were busy." He did not need to lie to her and say he had sent them.

Keegan was stunned, and his expression became ugly. "You assumed I didn't send them on purpose?"

"Whether it was on purpose or you forgot, it's best you don't promise someone things so easily," Stella replied.

Keegan's eyebrows were scrunched, and he wanted to say something before Aldor knocked on the door to enter.

"Mr. Kane, Mrs. Kane, the paperwork has been processed." Noticing that neither of them was answering, Aldor asked quietly, "Are you still going to discharge?"

Throughout the journey, both of them were silent. Aldor, on the other hand, was unaccustomed to this. Recently, both of them had been bickering quite frequently. Having them be so quiet actually made it feel creepier. He secretly glanced at the rearview mirror.

Keegan had his brows furrowed. Who knows what he is thinking about. Stella turned her head to stare out the window. Her expression was cold.

'What happened to both of them this time?' Aldor thought.

"Aldor." Keegan suddenly opened his mouth. "The white truffles I told you to send to my mother last time, have you sent them already?"

Stella's ears twitched when she heard it. Aldor nodded his head. "I have sent them."

"My mother has received them?" Keegan continued to ask.

"She was not present then, and the housemaid at home received them."

"Did you tell her that we sent them?"

"I've explained to them clearly as per your orders."

Keegan scrunched his eyebrows. "Then why did she not receive them?' he thought.

Keegan took his phone and called the telephone at Dahlia's residence. Not long after, the call was connected. Keegan said, "It's me."

The housemaid immediately recognized Keegan's voice. "Mr. Kane, why did you call home? Madam and Ms. Kane aren't here at the moment."

“I know. I’m looking for you to ask about something.”

“You may ask away.”

“I had Aldor send some white truffles over last time. He said that he passed them to you. Why did my mother say she didn’t?”

The housemaid’s voice grew anxious, and she stuttered, “Maybe – maybe it’s because I forgot about it.”

“Forgot about it?” Keegan’s deep voice bellowed, “Then you should find it right now. I’m on my way to come over and retrieve it.”

“The item was already stomped to pieces by Aurora. How could I possibly find it now?” the housemaid thought.

“Mr. Kane, I-I don’t know where I put it...”

“Never mind. We still have a moment before we arrive. You better search carefully. The house can only be so big. How could it be completely lost?”

The housemaid was on pins and needles. She did not dare say that it was tossed away by Aurora, so she could only lie, “I-I just remembered. I was cleaning the store room a few days ago, and the things were already molding, so I threw them away.”

“Threw it away?” Keegan’s voice turned chilly. “Those two boxes of white truffles cost up to ten thousand dollars. Did you actually throw them or steal them for yourself?”

Stealing was a severe accusation, so the housemaid panicked and desperately denied it. “I wasn’t me. I didn’t steal anything! Mr. Kane, I have worked for the Kane family for nearly twenty years. You know my personality. How could I possibly steal something that belongs to the master myself?”

“Well, where is this thing?”

Stella then looked at Keegan.

## Chapter 171

At any rate, the housemaid had worked for the Kane family for many years. Hence, the words Keegan spoke were quite insensitive. Stella originally wanted to tell him to forget about it since she had taken the slap already. There was no meaning in pursuing this further.

Before she could speak, she heard the housemaid stutter out, “It was... It was the missus... The missus threw away the item and did not let me...”

“Who are you talking to?” Before the housemaid could finish, Dahlia’s voice came from the phone. Then, Dahlia took the phone.

“It’s Mr. Kane. He’s asking about the white truffles incident..”

There was no sound on the other side. After a few seconds, Dahlia took over the phone. “It’s just two boxes of white truffles. Do you need to call back home to interrogate people?”

Keegan pursed his lips. “I just want to figure out this thing.”

Dahlia was infuriated. “What will you do after you figure it out? Call the cops to arrest us? She doesn’t have any other talent, but her talent for snitching is the best! Forget about not seeing the item. Even if I did, I would not accept it! If you have time, control your wife properly. She’s married to the Kane family. Stop siding with outsiders all the time!”

After she finished, she hung up the phone. Keegan held onto the phone and did not make a sound for a long while.

Stella let a sigh. ‘As long as it wasn’t him.’

She said softly, “Never mind, I originally didn’t want to send them. It’s given me peace of mind now.”

Keegan’s throat rumbled. After a while, he asked quietly, “Did it hurt?”

Stella was shocked for a moment until she saw him staring at her left cheek. Then, she understood what he was asking. In that instant, all the grievances welled up in her heart. Her eyes immediately turned red. She feared she would look shameful crying, so she averted her gaze. She suppressed the pain down her throat and tried to speak nonchalantly. “He’s my dad. How hard could he hit?”

In actual fact, it hurt badly. Albert had put almost all his strength into that slap. Stella’s face was slightly swollen, but she did not want to talk to Keegan about it. She feared the response would be disappointing and that a simple sentence from him would crumble her defenses.

After sending them back to the villa, Aldor left. The housemaid from their home came out and wanted to help Keegan. However, Keegan avoided her hands and said, “Go and prepare a tub of water. I want to have a shower.”

Stella said, “The doctor said that your injury should not come in contact with moisture.”

Keegan paused. “You can help me shower later.”

Stella was at a loss for words.

“That’s not a good idea,” Stella replied.

Keegan glanced at her. “It’s not like we haven’t showered together before. What’s so bad about

it?”

Stella remembered the outrageous acts in the bathroom, and her ears could not help but turn red. “It’s different now compared to before this!”

“Nothing’s different. That 20 million should make a sound when we throw it into the water. I’m injured because of you, so you should take some responsibility, right?”

This time, Stella had nothing to say. This was due to Keegan’s words precisely pinpointing the guilt she had in her heart.

‘It’s just a shower,’ Stella comforted herself. ‘It’s not like we’ll be doing something else. Keegan and I have seen each other naked so many times. What’s there to be nervous about?’

‘I’m already fed up with his physique. Giving him a shower would be no different from giving a cat and dog a shower,’ Stella thought.

Twenty minutes later, Stella was facing Keegan’s thick and muscular back, and she was so nervous her fingers shook.

‘Fed up, my ass! How is this the same as kittens and puppies? Who would be stunned when kittens and puppies are showering?’ Stella screamed inside her head.

Both of Keegan’s hands were on both sides of the bathtub. Water droplets glided down his face to his Adam’s apple, then came winding down to the water’s surface.

Nonchalantly, he turned around to look at her. His gaze was deep and innocent. “You’re not taking your clothes off?”

Stella was cautious. “What do you want to do?”

Keegan looked at her as if looking at an idiot. “When your clothes get wet, it’ll be harder to get them off. You should change into something thinner.”

“No need. Wearing this is much safer,” Stella replied.

Keegan was at a loss for words.

## Chapter 172

Unable to persuade further, Keegan refrained from speaking more.

Keegan could smell alcohol as Stella approached. Surprised, he asked, "Did you drink?"

"No," said Stella, her face flushing red with alcohol. After denying it, she realized that the smell of beer couldn't be hidden, and lying would only worsen it. She corrected herself, "Not a lot. Just a little."

It was indeed just as little as half a bottle of red wine. With Stella's alcohol tolerance, half a bottle is not enough to make her drunk.

Keegan stared at her for a few seconds, threw a towel at her, and said indifferently, "Wash yourself."

This was the first in Stella's life that she had to bathe someone.

Though they did mess around in the shower before, it was when she was trying to flirt with him by using the excuse of rubbing his back.

Not even able to finish rubbing his back, she ended up giving up. In the end, he had to wash her up and carry her back home.

In the past, Keegan rarely refused her advances. No matter how much he did not fancy her, they would still be intimate in bed once she started flirting.

Since last year though, he seemed to avoid being intimate with her.

Since the argument about having kids, Keegan seemed to be less and less interested in her.

'Maybe he's tired of me, and not wanting any children is just an excuse. Or perhaps he purely just wanted to protect Bella?'

'What an asshole! Why don't you consider protecting the one you love before you become intimate with her?'

Still deep in her thoughts, someone suddenly caught her wrist.

Her eyes locked onto Keegan's dark eyes as she returned to reality. He said in a hoarse voice, "What are you doing?"

Stella then realized that while her head was in the clouds, her hands had unconsciously rubbed downwards.

Feeling awkward, she hurriedly retracted her hands, but with a sudden strong pull from Keegan, Stella's whole body fell into the tub.

Water splashed out of the bathtub as Stella fell against Keegan. She struggled to get up, almost choking on the bath water.

Keegan single-handedly wrapped an arm around her waist, embracing her. The heat emanating from her back caused Stella's mind to draw a blank.

She heard Keegan's deep and throaty voice ringing next to her ear. "I told you to change your clothes earlier. Look what happened."

The scene and speech were sufficient to make this an intimate moment.

On the contrary, Stella seemed to have actually drunk too much as she complained in her drunken state. "It's all because of you. How would it turn out this way otherwise?"

Keegan was astounded for a moment before he laughed out loud.

The rumbling chest from his laughter could not hide his joy.

Stella was stupefied. She turned her head and looked at him.

This was the first time she saw Keegan smile like this.

He had such good looks but disliked smiling, usually keeping a poker face. Even if he laughed, it was of mockery and sneers.

The gentle yet intimate eyes right now were ones she had never seen before.

Stella opened her mouth, wanting to speak, but was stopped by a sudden kiss on her lips by Keegan.

She unconsciously opened her eyes in a daze, having forgotten to resist.

The alcohol may have made her braver, but her reaction, in contrast, was slower than usual.

Keegan was unusually gentler.

"It's all my fault."

Though still intimate, Stella thought in her daze, 'What does he mean by that?'

Anything after that instance was out of her control.

All in all, this was a messed-up night.

In the early morning of the next day, Stella was woken up by the phone ringing.

With her eyes still closed, she rummaged through the side of her bed for a long while before she remembered that the phone was at Keegan's side. She then shifted and murmured to him, "Pick up the phone."

Keegan frowned, picked up the phone, and saw the phone showed... Fifty million?

Who could this possibly be?

Keegan glanced at the woman, still refusing to open her eyes, and picked up the call.

"Hello?"

Chapter 173

A familiar voice came from the other end of the line when the call patched through.

To his surprise, it was Marshall

Keegan clenched his jaw and pursed his lips, not saying anything

Having received no reply from that end, Marshall hesitated for a while before he called out, Keegan?"

Keegan then gave a short "Yes" as a reply.

Marshall said, "Why can't your phone be reached?"

"No battery left "Keegan paused. "Are you looking for Stella?"

"

Marshall smiled. "I'm looking for you. I could not reach your phone, so I tried calling Stella instead "

'Stella

Keegan pondered over the name as he pressed his lips.

"Is there anything you need?"

Marshall's cleared his voice. "I've been busy these few days. When Aurora brought up the topic of your injury when I chatted with her this morning, I went to Vermont for further details. How are you feeling? Are you better now?"

Keegan pinched his eyebrows and said, "I'm fine."

"Vermont said the person had been caught. Do you need my help?"

Marshall's connections would definitely be able to let those two face prosecution.

"I'll contact you again if there's a need to."

As soon as Keegan finished speaking, Stella drowsily opened her eyes. "Who is it? Why are you on the line for so long?"

Her voice had a coarse undertone from just waking up, startling Marshall.

Keegan looked at her and said indifferently, "Marshall." After a pause, he asked, "Do you want to speak with him?"

Stella perked up instantly.

'Marshall didn't disclose the matter regarding the lawsuit, did he?'

She hastily snatched the phone, sat upright with her back facing Keegan, and nervously probed, "Mr. Moore, is there a reason for your current call?"

Keegan pursed his lips, unhappy.

Returning to reality, Marshall replied, "I couldn't reach Keegan's phone. Vermont mentioned that both of you met with trouble last night. Are you hurt?"

Stella sighed in relief. "That gave me a fright. I thought Mr. Moore was calling about the lawsuit.'

"I'm fine. Keegan was hurt, but it's not life-threatening."

Keegan...

"It's ok if you're fine. Do you want to come along to the jewelry exhibition the day after tomorrow?"

"What jewelry exhibition?"

Marshall warmly said, "It's my aunt's. She's organizing a jewelry exhibition the day after. She's a jewelry appraiser and Vice President of the Rivera Jewelry Association, with

many connections in the jewelry industry. She has recently been trying to prepare a semi-private jewelry exhibition with some private collections from her and some of her friends. There will also be jewelry collections from some of the branded companies present. Do you want to have a look?"

Having liked glittering jewelry, Stella would be thrilled to pick out a few sets if it were the past her. These expensive jewelry pieces are no longer within her budget since she's about to divorce Keegan. Window shopping for jewelry will only make her heart restless.

She then said, "I don't think I'll be going. I have to stay home to take care of my husband's broken arm."

The corner of Keegan's eyes twitched.

Who was it that said his wounds were not severe?

Marshall did not force the matter. "Alright, then. Take good care of Keegan. I'll come over once I'm finished."

After hanging up the phone, she saw Keegan looking at her quizzically.

Stella, in hindsight, moved sluggishly toward him as she recalled yesterday.

'I really shouldn't have drunk last night. I became indecisive once Keegan started teasing me. To think I came onto him when Keegan let me, using his injured arm as an excuse!'

It was better to forget about the past.

Right now, all she wanted to do was discard all the embarrassing moments from last night.

"Why is Marshall called Fifty Million?"

Chapter 174

Stella was still thinking about how to peacefully gloss over what transpired last night with Keegan. 'Yesterday was an accident. It can't be helped since even adults can sometimes be rash. 'He didn't even ask in the end. It even feels like he can't be bothered by it.'

Her mood immediately turned a little sour.

'I'd better not throw a tantrum. Blowing up here would make it seem like I'm self-conscious about last night.'

'Seeing it from another angle, let's treat it as getting a free night service since Keegan seemed willing to serve me.'

Following this train of thought, her heart felt a little at ease.

"I wrote it half-heartedly," said Stella, naturally not telling Keegan. Fifty million was the lawyer fees she wished Marshall charged her over the divorce case.

Obviously, she would not bring Marshall on board to fight her case since he was Keegan's friend, not expecting him to side with her even if he was onboarded.

That half-hearted contact name was not a lie at all.

Keegan did not believe a word of it but delved no further into the topic. Instead, he asked Stella, "What's my profile name on your phone's contact list?"

As he finished speaking, Keegan acutely sensed the change in Stella's demeanor as she quickly replied, "Your name, of course. What else would I use?"

Keegan stared at her for a few seconds and made Stella feel nervous from his stare, as if he would snatch her phone the next second just to have a look.

Despite that, Keegan did not take action as expected. After a while, he took his eyes off her, lifted the blanket, and got out of bed.

He stepped onto the woolen carpet bare-footed, bent down to pick up the pajamas, and slung it over his shoulders.

Stella stared at his body without batting an eyelid.

Keegan had very little body fat. His muscles were well-toned. Men with abs were nothing compared to those with well-toned back muscles. Any fitness enthusiast will know how hard it is to train the back muscles.

'Keegan has such a busy work schedule, yet he spares time to train. His sense of discipline is beyond human understanding.'

"Have you always looked at guys so meaningfully?"

Keegan put on his pants as he glanced back at her.

Stella blushed slightly, but it was not noticeable in the room with closed curtains and dim lighting.

"I worry that I'll have little chance to see it again in the future since I might not be able to openly see this after the divorce."

Keegan's fingers, which were working on his shirt buttons, halted. "Then should I unbutton and let you look for a while longer?"

Stella choked. "You don't have to deliberately do it."

Keegan did not pay her any more attention. He put on his clothes and went downstairs.

Soon after, Stella got out of bed as well.

'Keegan is a natural-born nemesis for a romantic like me. I thought something would be different after last night, but nothing has changed. It was only a night, and that was not the first, nor was there any special meaning behind it. Just adults being impulsive.'

She opened and rummaged through the bedside drawer and finally found the box of contraceptive pills. She tore it open and saw only one pill was left. Taking the pill, she swallowed it with water and threw the box into the rubbish bin.

Officially, he was still treating his arms, but Keegan did not rest at all. If he was not in the virtual meetings, he would be reviewing reports.

Stella was busy memorizing the script.

It took her one whole day to finally read the entire script.

'Daniel's story is outstanding. The script has no nonsense, with dynamic plots and unending excitement. The dialogue's word use is also elegant. He probably well-researched many sources of material.'

Having finished the script, Stella's interest was piqued.

That evening, Felicity called her.

"Stella, have you watched the news?"

Chapter 175

"What news?" Stella pressed the corner of her eyes from the strain of reading the script on her phone.

"All of Zeckary's work had been taken off the shelves. I assumed she was suspended."

"Who is it?"

"It was the original actress that was supposed to roleplay this role. She's a pretty famous female artist with many awards under her belt."

Since Stella signed the contract, Felicity joined the backstage crew's WhatsApp group. That was how she came across news like Zeckary being signed up for the role before Stella did.

"Why was she suspended?"

"Rumor has it that her stand was questionable regarding a sensitive topic she published. She had eluded to being exposed a few times in the past since those were groundless accusations with no evidence. She was ruined this time because someone dug out her published remark from ten years ago. I'm guessing Daniel knew this right from the start. That's why she was dropped."

'No wonder...

'Such an important role should not be empty, yet they were finding immediate substitutes at the last minute. I was very unlucky to be picked for this role.'

"This role of yours is popular, and many had their eyes on it. Daniel had received a lot of recommendations when the news of Zeckary's suspension came out, not knowing that you had already been confirmed by Daniel. That's why we should stay low-key from now until the end of the shoot to avoid any accidents."

The previous actor taking the role of the Queen still got blackmailed. Felicity's worry was not unfounded as things happen in this circle. Daniel, having known of this concern, recruited the lead role secretly. Even when he had done that, the original actor taking on the Queen's role was still blackmailed.

Having her remark from ten years ago dug up was quite sneaky.

Daniel chose Stella because he had taken a liking to her. On the other hand, it was to infuriate the perpetrator working behind the scenes.

He was indirectly trying to tell that person, "Even if someone was dropped, that role would not be for them."

That was why Stella, to a certain degree, was unlucky to have been picked for this role.

She may be new and lack any solid background, but that was why it won't cause a huge fuss if she was messed with.

Behind the chance, Daniel gave her lies to trap her. It would be up to her own strength to avoid the trap.

"Who do you think did this?"

Felicity sneered. "Most likely the one who wants this role the most."

Stella pursed her lips.

Kelly was aggressively promoting Bella during the auditions. Kelly would not have done that were it not for their past working relationship.

'If it really is Bella, then did Keegan have a hand in suspending Zeckary as well?'

In the study, as everyone gradually logged off from the virtual meeting, Vermont looked at Keegan's screen. He hesitated a moment before asking, "Do you really plan to let Albert invest in Semiconductor Technology?"

Vermont felt perplexed.

As the year's most promising technology company that deals with semiconductors, Semiconductor Technologies was highly anticipated by investors.

Once the Northon Trading Center approved the supporting documents and listed the company on its board, it can start profiting.

He could not understand why Keegan would let Albert have a share after he painstakingly grew the company.

To put Albert in a more positive light, he was smooth. To put it bluntly, he was pragmatic, speculative, short-sighted, and avaricious.

Since the marriage, he had been actively using the Kane family's name to bring in business deals.

Investing in Semiconductor Technologies, on the front, was to support research and development. To put it bluntly, he found potential in this company when it became listed and wanted to benefit from others' efforts.

If he really wanted to support research and development, he should already be aware of it when Keegan was busy looking for potential shareholders to buy out Semiconductor Technologies. Why did he not invest then?

Who was he trying to lie to by hypocritically saying that he wanted to support the research and development when the company was going through most grueling period and turning a profit?

To a significant degree, Vermont's bias toward Stella came from Albert's greed.

Chapter 176

But Stella obviously was cuter than Albert. Thinking about the fact that Stella helped earn

more than 30 million dollars, Vermont immediately felt that she was still quite pleasing to the

eye

He was even gifted a box of oysters.

“Albert not only wants to invest in the Northon project, but also in Semiconductor Technology Where’s he going to get so much money?”

The Jewell family’s trump card could not be more apparent to them than it currently was.

The Jewell family can only be considered a third-rate enterprise in Rivera before Stella married Keegan. The fact that they were even a third-rate enterprise was thanks to the wife’s guidance

When his wife was met with an accident, he hastily took control of the company and chased away a lot of key staff. It was a pity that his ambition did not match his capabilities, causing the company to meet its current plight within two years.

As the turnover rate increased and more orders were delayed, he began to plot against his soon

to-be graduating daughter.

The Jewell family may not be very wealthy, but they had at least stepped foot into the investment circle. Someone like Albert, who would only look for profit shamelessly, naturally became a regular at their business banquet.

To resolve this predicament right before his eyes, he started bringing his daughter to frequent these events.

Albert and his wife may be average in the looks department, but their daughter was truly

gorgeous.

Beauty and even celebrities were a dime a dozen in the circle. Celebrities may be well-liked by everyone, but marrying them was another different matter.

When the wealthy married, they emphasized their social status and how mutually beneficial the marriage was to both families. The bride should, of course, be a virgin.

Stella had perfectly fulfilled these few criteria.

She was beautiful, young, a virgin, and Albert's only child and daughter. No matter the cost of helping out with the Jewell family's immediate predicament, his asset would eventually have to be given to the next of kin once Albert was gone.

The suitors knocking on the Jewell family's door came in flocks.

For the sake of acquiring more funds, Albert would not refuse even if the other party was older

than him.

If he had so many funds, did he even need to sell his daughter back then?

Keegan sipped on his tea and flatly said, "If he received the Northon project by selling part of the company shares, he would easily be able to earn at least a hundred million dollars."

The Northon project's share was not small. Though Albert may not have a lot of money, his

familial connections with the Kane family already garnered him a few networks and resources from the circle these past few years.

All he needed to do was to rope in a few partners and set up a new company to bid for the Northon project. He will let Henry be the intermediary when the time comes, and the project could be theirs.

Once all was done, Albert could liquidate his shares by selling his shares to the other partners. He won't even have to bear any risk from the project.

"He would still have to get a hold of it," said Vermont, clicking his tongue. "Henry had already lost a lot from buying the bracelet. If Albert does not fork out the thirty million, will Henry even help him pull strings? Having to pay thirty million out before even turning a profit, on top of the money he needs to pull strings, I doubt he would earn a lot from this even if he were to finally receive the profit."

Having said this much, Vermont paused. "Did your wife use your money to supplement her family?"

Keegan cast a frosty glance at him. "Then why would she even bother letting you earn that thirty million?"

Vermont kept his mouth shut.

'I'm just making a wild guess. Why the aggression?'

This matter was preceded by prior incidents.

As her favorite grandson, that year, when Keegan and Stella were to be wed, Cordelia gifted a generous gift to the couple.

Apart from the complete collection of high-end jewelry and a limited-edition sports car, there was also a PINless bank card worth thirteen million and a hundred forty thousand dollars.

The jewelry and sports car were more valuable, as the card Cordelia gifted the couple should be used as pocket money.

It was just that the card was bound to Keegan's phone.

Not long after the wedding, Keegan received a ten million transfer notification when they were coincidentally together at that time. The beneficiary on the notification was Albert.

Chapter 177

Vermont started to have a terrible impression of her ever since that.

The Kane family could definitely afford that, but it was very spiteful of her to do that without telling her husband about it.

However, Keegan told him to keep his mouth shut. Otherwise, Cordelia would never have a good impression of Stella just because of that.

However, Stella had surprised Vermont too much in the recent month. He could not help but wonder if he was just prejudiced against her.

'Why would Stella set Albert up if she's really on his side?'

'She should do whatever she can to be with Keegan if she's the type who puts money before everything else. Why would she file a divorce?' Vermont thought to himself.

Besides, Stella was Dusk Galaxy.

The person he idolized for so long turned out to be the person he used to hate. Perhaps he loved Dusk Galaxy so much that he could not bring himself to her anymore.

Vermont glanced at Keegan and asked, "You didn't allow Albert to invest because of Stella, right?"

Keegan replied coldly, "You're overthinking. The more he invests, the easier I can control everything."

"Tsk." Vermont clicked his tongue. 'Why is Albert so naïve? Does he really think it's so easy to earn from Keegan?

'You can only earn whatever he wants you to.

'He can even turn eighty million into eight thousand if he doesn't want you to earn anything.'

"Oh, yes. Do you want to go to the jewelry exhibition that Marshall's aunt is organizing two days from now? I remember that Stella likes jewelry very much, right? I'll go with her if you can't find the time to. What do you think?"

Keegan glared at him. "Why are you so obsessed with her these days?"

Vermont blinked. "Am I?"

"You didn't like me bringing her to our gathering," Keegan replied in a flat tone.

Even though Vermont hid his frustration very well, Keegan could still tell with his sharp eyes.

Of course, Vermont could not tell Keegan that Stella was Dusk Galaxy.

He very much looked forward to seeing Keegan's reaction when he finally found out about that.

So, he said, "That's only because I thought she was a gold-digger that wanted to be a part of high society. I realized I could be wrong about her now that she wants a divorce from you. Besides, she helped me to make some money and gave me a crate of oysters. I've decided to scrap all my previous assumptions about her and try to be her friend."

As Vermont spoke, somebody knocked on the door.

"Come in."

Stella pushed the door open. She was holding a glass of milk as she said, "Mr. Kane, do you want some warm milk?"

'Mr. Kane?'

Vermont lifted his brows. 'Is she flirting?'

Keegan looked up and gazed at her “Sure,” he responded flatly.

Then, Stella went forward and handed Keegan the glass of milk.

Keegan took it from her. He noticed that Stella was staring at him as he was about to drink it. Then, he paused and said, “Is it poisoned?”

Stella’s mouth twitched. “What? I just want to chat with you because I thought you might be bored.”

She paused for a while before adding to make what she said less awkward, “The doctor said that a good mood could help your wound recover.”

Keegan stared at her for a few seconds and said, “I don’t think you want me to ever recover, do you?”

## Chapter 178

Stella was speechless.

On the other side of the screen, Vermont tried very hard to hold his laughter back.

Keegan was just mean.

Fortunately, Stella was shameless enough to not show her anger out loud. She felt a lot better after reminding herself of her intention of coming here.

“I was too inconsiderate. I only realized that I should take care of you since you were hurt because of me. I read a few jokes recently, and they’re hilarious. Do you want to hear them?”

Keegan was uncomfortable by Stella’s sudden change of attitude. From what he knew about her, she would never speak like this.

Normally, Stella would not hesitate to talk back at him if he were to speak to her like that. ‘What’s she up to?’

Keegan went silent for a few seconds before he said, “Sure.”

He took a sip of milk as he said this.

Stella thought for a moment. Then, she said, “One day, Mama Fly brought Baby Fly to a pile of poop for lunch.

“Then, Baby Fly asked Mama Fly, ‘Mama, mama, why are you eating poop?’

“After that, Mama Fly got angry, and she said, ‘Can you not talk about something so disgusting while we’re eating?!’”

Keegan was quiet.

His mouth was filled with the milk he had just drunk. On the other hand, Vermont did not hold himself back as he burst out laughing while thumping a hand on his desk.

That was when Stella realized Keegan was on a video call with Vermont. She immediately felt a little embarrassed.

Keegan struggled to swallow the milk. Then, he frowned and said, “Uncultured!”

“I thought it was pretty funny.” Vermont was crying with laughter. “Stella, you’re so talented at telling jokes.”

Vermont was not trying to flatter her at all: Perhaps it had something to do with Stella’s profession. She would use a different voice for every character while telling a story. So, the joke sounded like it was something that really happened.

Stella chuckled but did not speak as she thought Vermont was just making fun of her.

She would not have done that if she had known that Keegan was on a call with him.

Keegan glared at her when she was just about to chicken out. “Is that all?”

‘Do you think that the things you said aren’t uncultured?’

Stella refuted him inwardly as she said, “Yeah. I have another better one.

“There was a big fish and a small fish.

“One day, the small fish asked the big fish, “Big... fish... big... fish... what... do... you... like... to... eat?”

“Then, the big fish said, ‘I... like... to... eat... small... fish... that... talks... slowly.’

“After that, the small fish said, ‘Oh, no!’”

Nobody made a sound after Stella told the joke.

Stella also thought that it was kind of a bad joke. So, she coughed and said, “Is it not funny?”

Vermont showed his support. “No, it’s hilarious.”

However, Keegan said sarcastically, "Do you mean ridiculous?"

Stella held herself back again. Otherwise, she would grab the glass of milk in front of her and splash it on Keegan's face.

Vermont knew how to read people's reactions very well, so he immediately shifted the topic, "Stella, are you going to the jewelry exhibition in two days? Marshall's aunt has a Luminous Pearl that was found in a two-thousand-year-old tomb. She got it from an auction in a museum in Pairin. She wants to let the country have it, but she also wants to let everyone see its beauty before it becomes the country's possession. Are you interested in having a look?"

Stella suddenly got very tempted.

The Luminous Pearl was not an expensive thing, but the fact that it came from more than two thousand years ago made it very valuable.

Anyone who liked gems or was interested in collecting antiques would be intrigued by the history and how rare the Luminous Pearl was.

Chapter 179

"I... don't think I'm going. Keegan hasn't recovered yet, and I have to stay here to take care of him."

Stella spoke in a hesitant manner. Clearly, she was still very tempted to go.

Vermont responded, "He's not a kid that needs you to hug and tuck him in. Just leave him at home. I'll bring you there."

The edge of Keegan's eyebrow twitched. Suddenly, he felt like stuffing something into Vermont's mouth to shut him up.

"Oh... Maybe... I should go then?"

She asked Keegan tentatively.

Keegan gazed at her. "Do whatever you want. Why are you looking at me?"

"Oh." And so, Stella began to ask more questions about the exhibition. "What time does it start?"

"Probably seven to eight at night. We'll only be able to witness the beauty of the Luminous Pearl when it's dark. Just get ready by then, and I'll come to pick you up."

Vermont went offline after saying that.

The study room suddenly went quiet. Stella had yet to get what she came here for, so she did not leave.

Keegan was starting to find her presence annoying.

He glared at her and said, "Can I help you?"

"Nope. Just do whatever you were doing. I'll stay here. Let me know if you need any help."

Keegan responded coldly, "You're distracting me here."

Stella's mouth twitched. Then, she said softly while resisting the urge to scold Keegan, "The doctor said that you shouldn't overwork yourself while recovering. Mr. Kane, you've been staying here for hours. Let me massage your shoulders for you."

Keegan looked at her strangely. "Is something wrong with you?"

Keegan's words instantly tear down Stella's disguise as a virtuous wife. "Keegan, you'd better know your place. I'm only trying to make up for what happened because I feel bad that you're injured. I'll just leave if you don't want me here!"

Keegan looked at her from head to toe and said bluntly, "What about last night? Were you trying to compensate me by devoting yourself to me?"

Stella choked as her ears turned red. She was embarrassed and mad at the same time. She wanted to turn around and leave, but Keegan grabbed her wrist. Then, he said with a straight face, "Didn't you say that you were going to massage my shoulders?"

'Piss off!'

All Stella wanted to do was to fill his mouth with that glass of milk and shut him up!

She could only calm herself down after imagining herself doing that to him.

Dahlia gave her a good scolding when she made Keegan's nose bleed before, and Dahlia would probably skin her alive if she found out that Keegan was hurt because of her again.

Besides, Stella did not come into the study room to argue with him.

So, after hesitating for a few seconds, she went behind Keegan and started massaging his shoulders.

Even though Stella was skinny, she had enormous strength for her size.

Her muscles would get sore from all the training in university back then, so she and her classmates had to always massage each other to ease the soreness.

Keegan's eyes were half-closed. Clearly, he was enjoying it.

When the timing seemed right, Stella asked softly, "Mr. Kane, do you know who Ibelia Zeckary is?"

Keegan frowned. "Who?"

"A very famous actress. She was a forensic doctor in the police drama that aired this year. We watched it together, right?"

Keegan looked down and thought for a moment. He only remembered that the male lead died in the show, and Stella could not stop crying while lying on the sofa. Then, she woke up with a pair of swollen eyes. He could not recall anything else about the plot.

"What about it?"

Stella responded softly, "That actress got canceled by the entire internet."