

My Billionaire Ex-Husband Chase Me Back - Chapter 165 -196

Chapter 165: The Person Behind It All

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"Do you know where your brother-in-law is?" Bella asked, suspecting that Andreas Corby may have been the one to hire Dark Skull to investigate her.

Jack was unsure why she asked, but he still replied, "I heard he was disciplined by both his parents and his wife. They held him accountable for what had happened and asked him not to leave the house for a while. So, after arriving here, he just stayed at home. Why do you want to know?"

Bella was surprised to hear that Andreas had arrived and stayed in New York. She thought he was still in this country, plotting something terrible to take revenge on her. But it seems she was mistaken.

"When did he arrive there?" She asked again to make sure.

"I'm not sure, but I guess he left the day after we fired him. What's wrong, Bella? Why are you suddenly interested in him? Did he do something to you?"

Suddenly, Jack's voice sounded slightly worried as he imagined Andreas seeking revenge against Bella.

"I'm not sure, Jack. I am only suspicious of something."

"What is it?"

"Maybe this sounds crazy, but I think your brother-in-law might have hired a mafia to investigate me," Bella said nonchalantly. However, Jack feels like lightning struck him; he is beyond shocked.

"Damn that guy! No, you're not sounding crazy, Bella. I trust your instinct. How dare he take out his anger on you?" Jack couldn't hold back his anger any longer. "He should know if he has an idea to revenge on you, then I will not take him lightly this time."

Throughout these past few years, Jack has refrained from taking any action against Andreas Corby. He simply cannot bear to see his wife upset. However, if Andreas were to harm Bella, a dear friend Jack considers a sister he never had, he would not hesitate to take swift and severe action against him.

Jack continued, "Bella, my patient is now running out. I will no longer consider him a member of my family. I will make sure he receives the punishment he deserves for trying to harm you."

Bella, "..."

His words move her, but why does he sound so exaggerated?

"Oh please, Jack, don't do something stupid," Bella says, amused by how angry Jack is now. "I didn't say he's the actual perpetrator. I was just suspicious. I still need to ask Stefan to investigate further. But if he was in his house right now, I'm starting to assume he couldn't be the one who hired them."

Jack was relieved to hear that, but now he worries about Bella's safety. "Besides Andreas, is there someone else you suspect as well?" he asked, evidently concerned.

Bella was lost in thought, wondering if she had any new enemies besides Laura, Jessica, and Andreas Corby.

'Could there be anyone else?' She wondered if someone else was involved as she tried to remember.

Her thoughts drift to her family, and she shivers at the thought of her uncle and brother being connected to such an evil organization. However, she dismisses the idea as impossible since they lack the resources and money to be involved.

However, just before Bella ended the phone call, she suddenly remembered Sam's words, saying that he usually encounters the Dark Skull on his missions. Bella suddenly felt goosebumps as a particular face crossed her mind.

She tightened her grip on her cell phone, wondering how she could have forgotten about him. Her connection with him was enough to make someone curious about her.

"No. I don't have..." Bella said, even though her mind was now filled with Sean's face.

Bella's mind suddenly became crystal clear, like the thick mist covering her mind had disappeared. Now, she could connect all the dots that had made her restless. After Sean makes phone calls and sends someone to give her a card, the Dark Skull organization starts to dig into her profile.

It must be because of Sean. If it's not triggered by Sean, who else could trigger it?

She still remembers Sean telling her he couldn't contact their family during the mission because they feared the enemy would find out about them.

And the timing was perfect. After Sean calls her and sends someone to deliver the gift, the Dark Skull searches for information about her.

Thinking about that is enough to make Bella's pulse race, and her blood runs cold to know that what Sean feared has become true.

She couldn't fathom the level of cruelty the Dark Skull was capable of. However, according to Sam's information, she knew this evil organization could threaten her, Dax, and maybe her close friends and their family.

Bella hung up the phone after discussing essential matters with Jack. She stood by the window, her mind in chaos as she thought about the Dark Skull and its connection to Sean.

Her hand clenched into a fist. She feels angry and worried simultaneously.

She was angry with herself because she gave Sean hope that their relationship could continue, and she worried that The Dark Skull would harm her and Dax.

What worried Bella even more was that she had instructed Stefan to investigate Dark Skull and find out why they tried to dig up her information, but Stefan had not yet reported anything.

Sigh!

Another minute passed, and suddenly, out of nowhere, she whispered his name, Tristan.

"Should I tell Tristan about Dark Skull and Sean!?" She feels confused.

If she told Tristan about this, she could picture his temper flaring up. He might bring up her relationship with Sean, which they always avoid discussing.

Bella is aware that Tristan knows about her relationship with Sean, but he never once tries to ask. This makes her confused as to why he looks so calm about it.

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The day went by quickly.

Before Bella finishes work for the day, she has an important meeting scheduled with Daniel Sullivan, the Director of Corporate Legal. She will be briefed on their progress.

Daniel Sullivan finally arrived at her office with Leo. She asked them to sit in the sitting area and soon joined them.

Bella listens in silence as Daniel Sullivan reports that all the legal matters are proceeding smoothly. All the directors have returned the money and assets they had taken from the company.

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Chapter 166: Investigate The Invisible Hands Behind Her

Bella listens silently as Daniel Sullivan reports that all legal matters are proceeding smoothly. All the directors have returned the money and assets they took from the company.

Daniel also informed that S Jewelry withdrew its lawsuit against Stellar Entertainment, but they are still suing Laura Kiels. Bella knows Tristan will not help her — he's already given her clues to assist her in sending Laura to jail.

She couldn't believe Tristan would still be eager to help her, even though she refused the offer more than once. His perseverance and sincere assistance on this matter made her relate more and more to his kindness and caring.

When Daniel reports about Laura Kiels, her curiosity kicks in for more details.

'Does Laura Kiels have enough funds to compensate for the company's losses due to her negligence?' This is one of the questions that has consistently appeared on her mind lately. She feels curious.

"Miss Laura Kiels has paid all her debt and other outstanding liabilities and signed the official non-reversible released and discharged papers. From now on, she is no longer part of Stellar Entertainment," Daniel Sullivan's explanation surprised Bella. She doesn't believe Laura Kiels had a lot of money to settle everything quickly.

'Did she have hidden funds and assets we didn't know about?' She tried to remember if she read Stefan's report correctly.

After a long silence, Bella asked, "What about S Jewelry's lawsuit against her?"

"Laura Kiels also settled her legal liabilities with them. My people say she paid for everything and started campaigning to clear her name. It seems like she had someone with unlimited funds and resources backing her; from what we could observe on the internet trends, her campaign has seen some initial results. She's starting to get some A-Netz sympathy."

“Nah, I doubt they real A-Netz. They are more like buzzers. You know, someone paid those people to write nicely about Laura Kiels and blame our company for making Laura withdraw from the entertainment industry,” Leo snarled.

Daniel Sullivan was stunned to hear how casually Leo said that. He knew such practices were standard in the industry. Still, from the legal perspective, until they had proof, he couldn't suggest anything like that to Bella.

“Sir, are you sure? I mean, do you have any proof? If you have, we can clear our company's name with your proof...” Daniel Sullivan said, worried about the company's negative image if that was true.

“Yeah,” Leo answered, “No need to worry, Danny. Our Boss will take care of it, right, Boss?” He continued his words in a casual tone while looking at Bella.

Daniel silently doubted Leo's words. He looked at Bella, waiting for her reaction.

“Sure, I'll take care of it,” Bella responded reassuringly. She still had an ace up her sleeve to deal with Laura.

Bella wasn't worried about Laura, but what concerned her now was who her powerful backup would be. It wasn't Tristan, and Andreas Corby couldn't either, as his wife and parents now restricted his outside house access and the use of his funds and assets.

“See! Our Boss is the best!” He said proudly while glancing at Daniel Sullivan.

Leo knew Bella would be the second person in the company to have the privilege of contacting their company hacker to get whatever information she wanted quickly.

Daniel Sullivan was amazed; he nodded in relief, hearing Bella's confirmation. At least their company wouldn't suffer anything from this massive purge of firing so many corrupt directors and even firing their embarrassing actresses and actors.

“Boss, do you know who helped her? Or at least, can you guess?” Leo asked again. Even though he was suspicious, Jessica Sinclair would help Laura. However, he rejected the thought quickly because the Sinclair Group was still suing Laura.

Bella shook her head. She was still surprised to learn that Laura Kiels had the resources to settle everything and even started a social media campaign to restore her image.

Despite her curiosity about the invisible hands that backed and supported Laura, she didn't dig more about it, at least for the moment. After a few minutes of chatting about another company's matters, Bella dismissed Daniel Sullivan.

However,

Bella asks Leo to stay. She needs to discuss their plan to fly to Nova City tomorrow.

"Rest assured, Boss. Everything is already planned out. The beach villa where you and Dax will be staying has already been taken care of. Dana, My secretary, has already flown there to prepare everything for our arrival," Leo reassured Bella.

He knew his Boss was slightly worried about bringing her son on this trip, so he cared for everything to ensure a smooth and stress-free experience.

"Thank you, Leo, for your initiative and hard work."

Leo chuckled and responded, "It's fine, Boss. That's my job." However, he soon remembered something and added, "Oh, right. I have booked a commercial flight for noon tomorrow. Unfortunately, local airlines do not offer first-class seats, and the business class seats are no different than the economy class seats, so the seating might be uncomfortable. I hope you and Dax can endure it. But don't worry; it's only a three-hour flight."

Leo actually suggested that they rent a private jet to fly there. The price wasn't too expensive, but Bella strongly rejected the idea.

Bella took a deep sigh. "I'm sorry, Leo, but you must cancel your flight booking. We'll take a private jet," she said casually.

He was confused when he heard Bella's words.

"Wait, wait, Bella... I thought you strongly rejected my idea to rent a jet!? What changed your mind? Seriously, tell me."

Bella didn't immediately respond to Leo's question. Instead, she calmly stood up and walked to her desk to gather her belongings. Once she was ready to leave, she glanced at Leo, who was still seated in his spot.

When Bella saw his comical expression, she was amused. Leo seemed to be cosplaying as a mannequin, his curious gaze locked on her.

"Tristan didn't want his son to fly on a commercial flight, so he bought a private jet that was complete with all the operation and maintenance for Dax against my advice."

"What the hell... What a loving and wonderful father he is." Leo can't help but curse and compliment Tristan in the same sentence. He was surprised to hear that Tristan bought a jet for such an excuse.

"I know, right." Bella chuckled as she walked to the elevator, "I will go home now, Leo. I need to pack..."

Leo ran after her, "Boss, would you mind asking boss Tristan to adopt me? I'm willing to be his son."

Bella chuckled, hearing his silly words.

As the elevator doors slowly closed, she said, "Don't be shameless, Leo. I like you as it is."

Leo, "..."

She continues, "Tristan's assistant may call you about our flight schedule. See you tomorrow."

Leo immediately returned to his room and called to cancel the plane tickets.

Not long after, he got a call from an unknown number.

'Tristan's assistant?' He wonders and finally picks up the call.

"Hello, Mr. Smith, I'm Dylan Cooper, Tristan Sinclair's assistant. Did Ms. Bella tell you about me?"

"Hello, Mr. Cooper... Yes, she told me you would call me about the private jet..."

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 167: Fly To Nova City

The day Bella, Dax, and Noora fly to Nova City finally arrives.

However, before they leave the house, a drama unfolds.

As Bella stepped out of the house, she noticed two similar cars parked outside. In front of her was Tristan's car, which was all set to take them to the airport. Meanwhile, her grandfather's driver was loading their luggage into the car parked behind Tristan's.

Bella paused before walking towards Tristan's car, her eyes fixed on her grandfather chatting with Nick by the vehicle. Both looked dashing in their formal travel outfits.

"Will Grandpa fly to his hometown, East City?" Bella muttered softly, but Dax, standing beside her, could hear her voice clearly.

"No, Mommy. Grandpa and Uncle Nick will come with us flying to Nova City." Dax said excitedly, then ran toward his father.

Bella, "..."

After nodding at Tristan as if asking him to wait, Bella walked over to her grandfather.

"Are you going to fly to your hometown, Grandpa? You look so neat!" Bella asked, pretending not to know that her grandfather would join them.

Isaac was surprised to see Bella standing beside him. He cleared his throat and exaggeratedly gestured for his chauffeur to prepare the car. Before he looked at her again, smiling broadly as he said, "Oh, I will fly, alright. But not to East City. I will fly with you and Dax to Nova City."

Bella finds her grandfather's expression funny, but she tries not to laugh out loud. She just gave out a slight smile.

"Grandfather, if I recall correctly, you refused to come with us two days ago. What made you suddenly change your mind?" She asked while quickly glancing at her son.

Bella caught sight of Dax, looking amused as he was chatting with the same amused Tristan. Watching them laugh together like that was enough to make her heart race once more.

'Oh, Dax, you really like your father, don't you?!' She speaks to herself.

She hurriedly fixed her gaze on her grandpa.

Isaac Donovan sighed deeply before responding to Bella's question, "That's because Lewis decided to go to Nova City with you. How could I allow him more time with my little Dax while I feel lonely in East City? No way. I'm coming too."

Bella was surprised as she didn't recall informing Lewis Sinclair about their travel plans.

Suddenly, a confident man's face appears in her mind, 'Is it Tristan!? It must be him who told Grandpa Lewis, right?'

Curious to know the answer, Bella looked at Tristan. She saw him approach them with his warm, gentle smile.

"You are the one who told your Grandpa about our trip?"

"No, I didn't. I mean, if I did, it must be accidentally. I didn't ask him to follow you, though... That's all on him," Tristan said as he grinned slightly guilty at Bella and Grandpa Lewis. He didn't dare confess that he had posted the travel information in their Cupid Alliance group.

Bella frowned at his unclear answer.

“Mom,” Dax suddenly shouted from inside the car. I was the one who asked Grandpa Lewis to join us. It would be very lonely if Aunt Noora and I were at home while you were working, so...” He worried that his mother would be angry because he had successfully convinced his great-grandpa to follow them without asking his mother’s permission.

Initially curious about the situation, Bella smiled and nodded at Dax, showing her understanding. Then, she urged them to leave for the airport immediately.

She didn’t mind if her grandpa and Tristan’s Grandpa came with them, but she was afraid that Leo’s beach villa didn’t have enough room to accommodate them.

She could have made arrangements in Nova City if they had informed her earlier. Now, she needs to message Leo about the plan change; it is possible they may need to find a villa with more room.

Sigh!

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Before long,

Two cars arrived at Sinclair Group’s private airport. Bella spotted Leo and Sam waiting for her in the VIP lounge.

After a short greeting, they immediately walked towards the black jet parked near the airport’s lounge room.

Bella was speechless upon seeing the jet they were about to board. Though she knew very little about passenger aircraft, she could deduce that Tristan must have spent considerable money on the superjet. It looked new and slightly bigger than a typical private jet.

As the others walked to the jet, she approached Tristan and asked, “This isn’t the one you bought for Dax, is it?”

“Yes, this is it. It is currently still under another person’s name, but the ownership of this airplane will soon be changed to our son’s name,” Tristan explained. He looked at Bella with concern. “Bella, do you not like this type of jet? Or is it the color that you don’t like?”

Bella, “....”

Does she have the privilege to voice her mind? Gosh, this man!

"It's Dax's plane, so it's better to ask him directly. Anyway, thank you, Tristan. I am leaving now," Bella said as she walked away.

"Bella, would you mind calling me once you guys have landed?"

"Sure!" Bella answers while only glancing at him. She couldn't look too long at Tristan. The more she looks into his eyes, the more she worries about herself.

But her glance seems enough to Tristan. He smiles while waving his hand to them.

He stood at his place, watching the superjet take off and fly until it vanished behind the horizon.

Later,

A man in a black suit in his mid-forties approached Tristan. He was the director of this airport. His name is Albert. After greeting Tristan politely, the man walked with Tristan towards his car.

"Sir, are you sure you want to change the ownership of the super jet from your name to young master Daxton?" the man politely asked.

"Yes. And please do it faster...and quietly!" Tristan ordered.

If the superjet was in Daxton's name, he was sure Bella would use it whenever she wanted to go on a business trip.

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Chapter 168: Surprised to See Someone

If the superjet was in Daxton's name, Tristan was sure Bella would use it whenever she wanted to go on a business trip.

He planned to give his wife a jet but used their son's name. Because he knew Bella would refuse if he gave it to her directly.

"Yes, Sir. I will expedite the arrangement."

"I expect no less from you, Albert," Tristan responded, climbing into his car.

He hates that he returned home alone today. But he must fly to Singapore tomorrow morning for an appointment with the Prime Minister of Singapore and accompany them in inspecting the newly built super-efficient water and waste treatment facility that Sinclair's Group has built and operated. But he doesn't really care about his new promising ventures.

He only cares about completing his Singapore trip as soon as possible and joining his family in Nova City.

And for that, he felt excited and couldn't help but smile.

Nova City.

Bella and the others arrived at Nova City at six in the evening.

When they arrive at the beach villa, Bella realizes that they are not staying at the Villa that Leo had rented but rather at Tristan's Villa.

Although surprised, she opted not to voice her concern as the Villa that Leo booked for her only had three bedrooms, which would not be sufficient to accommodate her entire entourage.

The sky was already dark. Bella couldn't see the view from the area near the Villa.

Even so, she could see the garden lights illuminating the surroundings and making them look pretty. She could faintly hear the waves crashing and guessed the beach was nearby. This would be perfect because Dax could play on the beach without any worries.

After ensuring that Dax and Noora exited the car, Bella followed them. However, before she could fully stand on her feet, she was shocked by what she saw.

'Geoffrey? Why did he come here? He's supposed to be with Tristan, right?'

Bella was speechless when she saw Geoffrey instructing several workers to load their luggage and help Isaac and Lewis to enter the Villa.

When she saw Geoffrey approach them, she couldn't help but ask, "I was surprised to see you here. Is there any particular reason, Geoffrey?"

"Welcome to the Sinclair's beach house, Young Madam and Young Master," Geoffrey greeted Bella and Dax with a polite smile.

He explained to Bella that Tristan had instructed him to prepare the beach villa to be ready when Bella and Dax arrived. So, he flew here the day before.

"Hello, teacher Geoff..." Dax smiled at Geoffrey with a wink; he knew Geoffrey had already flown to this place through their Cupid Alliance group chat.

“Young Master, Young Lady, please follow me inside...” Geoffrey beckoned them. She said nothing else and followed them into the house.

The expansive Villa boasted six main bedrooms, ensuring each had its own space.

Bella and Dax were assigned rooms on the second floor. Bella gets the primary and most spacious bedroom with an unobstructed beach view. Dax gets the smaller ones adjacent to Bella's room, which has a beach, pool, and garden view. The elders will use the guest rooms on the first floor, as the rooms are the closest rooms to the living and dining room.

The living and dining rooms are located in one big hall. It is also the most extensive section of the Villa. Geoffrey surprises them with delicious food and drinks when they arrive at the living and dining room. He also politely insists Bella, Dax, and the elders have dinner before anything else.

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After a lovely dinner, the elder excused themselves as they needed to stretch their backs and probably get some sleep early.

Bella accompanied Dax to his room. When they arrived, she saw Noora unpacking Dax's suitcase.

“Auntie, you should have dinner first...” Bella felt sorry to see her work so hard.

Noora paused and looked at Bella, “I think I will pass dinner, Miss. I'm still full from eating a lot of chocolate cakes and cheesecakes on the plane.”

“Aunty, why do I remember differently? I saw you eat not only cakes but also steak, spaghetti, and whatever the flight attendants offer,” Dax said casually as he sat on the sofa in the corner.

“Oh, please, young master. Didn't you promise when we were on the plane not to embarrass me if I helped you finish your cakes?” Noora was speechless.

Dax only smiled slightly but remained silent, gazing out the window, attempting to glimpse the beach. However, all he could see was a garden and a swimming pool. Despite this, he felt enthusiastic and looked forward to observing the scenery behind the Villa the following day.

Bella chuckled upon hearing their words. She let Noora continue to arrange Dax's belongings and looked around the room.

There was a massive glass wall with a sea view, but she couldn't see the sea then. She could only hear the waves crushing the rock in the distance.

Bella glances at her son, now looking bored on the sofa. She approached him and sat beside him.

"Baby... if you can't sleep alone, you can come to my room," she said while ruffling her smooth hair.

"Mom, I'm not a child. I'm an adult..."

Bella feels amused hearing his words.

"Well, you're still my baby in my eyes," she said with a smile as she kissed his cheek. "Alright, go wash up and change into your pajamas." After Dax settled, Bella left.

Her bedroom is adjacent to Dax's room, with a small lounge area in between that has a beach view and a veranda.

Before entering her bedroom, Bella checked the veranda and was surprised to see stairs leading to the garden. These stairs lead to the infinity pool and the path to the beach.

'Gosh, what a beautiful place. Has Tristan ever come to this place? Why did he never bring me here?' Bella wondered, feeling gloomy, remembering their past marriage. She shivered as the cold sea wind blew, pulling her back from her thoughts.

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Chapter 169: Touch by His Kindness

Bella immediately entered the house again. After locking the glass door, she finally entered her bedroom. The room has a modern design with wooden furniture and is mainly decorated with earth-tone colors.

The big bed in the middle of the room, with white sheets, made her want to throw herself there immediately. She was starting to feel sleepy.

However,

When Bella saw her suitcase and bag near the mini walk-in closet, she took a deep breath. She needed to unpack. Just before she wanted to do that, a soft knock from the door stopped her.

"Yes?" She shouted as she walked to the door. She opened it and found Noora standing there.

“Miss, I will help you unpack...” Noora said and entered the room.

Bella did not stop her but instead took her handbag. She needs her cell phone to call a particular person in the capital.

“Aunty, how is the house?” Bella asked as she returned her bag to the table after finding her cell phone. She then walked to the sofa and settled there.

“This Villa is massive. I also had my own room in the back wing. I’ve met all the Villa’s staff, including Mr. Geoffrey, and they told me about many things...” Noora excitedly explained.

Bella could only listen in silence, pretending to be interested in the conversation.

“It appears that Master Tristan has already arranged for you and the young master to enjoy a vacation here, Miss...”

She smiles, hearing Noora’s words, and out of nowhere, she answers, “Yes, he is so kind...”

After several weeks of living near Tristan and seeing him daily, Bella could sense his seriousness. His words and actions were always in harmony.

One of the most touching moments that Bella witnessed was when Tristan showed great enthusiasm and cared for their son.

Bella never thought that Tristan, a cold and aloof man she married and divorced years ago, had a soft heart and fatherly figure. Tristan’s fatherly figure is something Bella has always longed for. Because she never received attention and affection from her own father.

‘Tristan, can you not show all your cards!? All sides of your loving side?’ Bella secretly took a deep breath as she saw Tristan’s name on her cell phone’s contact list.

“Oh, and did you know, Miss...” Noora’s voice distracted Bella from her lingering feelings for Tristan. She looked at Noora curiously.

“The villa has a private beach that only the owner can access. This allows master Dax to safely play on the beach without interference from others,” explained Noora.

Bella is pleased to hear that. She understands that her son does not enjoy crowded places, such as amusement parks or shopping centers; instead, he prefers to visit quiet places like museums or the lakes behind their house in Sweden.

“That’s perfect...” Bella said. It’s great to hear that she is starting to imagine her son spending time on the beach.

“They also have a private dock with a yacht and a jet ski park on a pier not too far from here...” said Noora as she skillfully hung Bella’s formal clothes and some home and beach clothes into the closet.

Bella, “...”

“And you won’t believe it, Miss. Mr Tristan arranged for a chef from his house to cook for us for the whole week. Oh, one more thing... there is a set of seafarers who will standby on the yacht, so young master Dax can immediately go fishing without waiting for the crew to arrive at the pier...”

The more Bella heard Noora talking, the more her head became dizzy.

“Aunty Noora, please ensure Dax uses sunblock before heading to the beach tomorrow. And don’t let him go fishing alone or just with the grandad; you or Geoffrey must accompany him on the beach, the swimming pool, or the yacht,” she worriedly said.

Bella won’t be able to accompany Dax tomorrow as she has a packed schedule. She will be meeting with the CEO and executive directors of Celebes Energy. After the meeting, they will be visiting a mining site at a secluded location. Just thinking about it is enough to make her even more exhausted.

Before long,

Noora finished unpacking two suitcases and then excused herself, leaving Bella to rest.

But Bella can’t rest now. She needs to contact Tristan. She immediately dialed Tristan’s number.

On the second ring, Tristan answered the phone. Bella could hear his excited voice from the other end. “Hi, Bella... I’m so glad you finally called me.”

“Tristan, I apologize for not getting back to you sooner. Since we arrived, Geoffrey treated us to dinner, and I have been quite busy talking with Grandpa. I also need to help Dax settle into his new bedroom. I only just got a chance to go into my room now.” Bella explained.

“It’s fine, Bella. I’ve got a report from Geoffrey...” Tristan smiled happily. “How’s the place? Do you like it?”

Bella took a deep breath in silence and felt blessed. Tristan had arranged a beach house with a private beach for them, which she appreciated.

She was happy that their son could finally enjoy what he had longed for—a beach vacation. Dax had always expressed his desire to go to the beach, but she had never been able to fulfill it for him.

But now, she felt awkward because Tristan had already done so much for her and Dax.

“Even though it was already dark when I arrived, I must say that this place is beautiful and peaceful. I didn’t hear any sounds of cars or machines in the distance, only the soothing sound of nature and waves,” Bella finally expressed her feelings towards this place.

“I’m glad to hear that you’re happy, Bella. You’ll have the opportunity to see the beauty of that place tomorrow.” Tristan paused to sigh deeply, feeling bad because he couldn’t join them now.

“I wish I could be there with you and Dax. But I won’t be able to, as I can’t cancel this business trip...” He continues.

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Chapter 170: Tristan Confession

“I wish I could be there with you and Dax. But I won’t be able to, as I can’t cancel this business trip...” He continues.

“Oh, come on, Tristan,” Bella chuckled when she heard his gloomy tone. “I find it amusing to hear you say those words. In the past, you were always on your business trips and never had time for me.”

She tried to tease him so he wouldn’t feel annoyed, but it turned out that her efforts actually made Tristan even more sad.

“I feel like I need to beat my past self. I can’t believe I ignored someone as beautiful, graceful, kind, and intelligent as you, Bella...”

Her face flushed with redness after hearing such a sweet word from Tristan’s mouth.

‘Geez! Did I give him the wrong signal? Why did he start flirting out of the blue?’

“Tristan, thank you so much.” She sincerely said, ignoring the questions echoing in her mind.

“For what?”

Bella smiled as she gently touched her forehead, discreetly massaging it without being too obvious, and said, “I appreciate what you did to Dax and me. But I’m a bit curious,

though....Why are you so kind to me? If you spoiled Dax alone, I would understand, and I wouldn't mind. You are his father, after all. But I can read between the lines, Tristan."

"Damn! Am I that obvious and easily read, Bella? Hahaha... It's, maybe, because I'm trying my best to show you the real me. Not someone who planned to divorce you five years ago. I hope you understand by now, Bella. I often told you I want you to return to me as my wife. And that is the truth."

Bella's pulse quickened as she heard his soft, sincere voice and laugh.

"Please, give me a chance. As I promised you many times, I won't let you down this time. I won't hurt you; no one in my family can hurt you because I will protect you from anything bad that comes from any... I'll take care of you for the rest of your life... and that goes for Dax, too."

How could she ignore him when he expresses his feelings like this?

Bella closed her eyes when she heard him continue his confession.

"I won't force you to accept me. But please never doubt my words, Bella. I'm different from Tristan from the past."

Silence hung in the air as Tristan waited for Bella to respond.

After a moment, she finally said, "Tristan, may I ask you..."

"Yes. Whatever you want to ask." Tristan immediately said. He evidently tensed but tried so hard to sound gentle and soft.

"Are you really not coming from the future?"

"Huh!? What do you mean? I don't get it."

"I know it may sound silly. But I need you to hear me and read between the lines. You see, from Chinese novels I often read, a person could transmigrate into his or her body in the past to correct their past mistakes. That's how I see you in the last several weeks. You are not the person whom I lived with five years ago. Because that person was cold and indifferent to me."

"Hahaha, I don't exactly understand what you mean. But it has a positive vibe. And if it means you believe I'm not like you remember the last time, you are free to assume I transmigrate from my future self. Because I'm correcting my past mistakes. Hurting you so profoundly was a terrible, terrible mistake, Bella."

Bella, "...."

She was rendered speechless. And for almost a few minutes, she was silent.

"Bella? Are you still there?" Tristan asked again after he hadn't heard her say anything.

"I'm here."

"This conversation really means something to me, Bella. For something this important, only hearing your voice is not enough. May I video call you, Bella?" Tristan asked, almost begging. Still, he was actually asking this because he wanted to see her face. He misses her so much.

"V-Video call... No! Not now, Tristan." Bella rejected it firmly. She opened her eyes wide, staring at the ceiling, too surprised to hear his request.

How can they make a video call now?

She was sure he would be on video calls until morning if they did.

"Why not?"

There's nothing from Bella but her silence.

She didn't want to answer him.

"I miss you, Bella. Please let me video call you. I want to see your face..."

"Sorry, Tristan. Maybe another time. I'm so tired of looking at any kind of monitor right now. Also, I'm desperate for a good shower. Let's talk again tomorrow, okay? Good night!" Bella said without giving him a chance to continue what he was saying.

Beep!

Bella ended the call and threw her cell phone on the sofa. She immediately rushed to the bathroom to clean herself with a warm and comforting shower. The shower in Tristan's Villa was so good. It enables Bella to meditate during the shower and calm herself down from thinking about Tristan.

After almost half an hour, Bella dried herself and wore silk pajamas. She didn't rush to sleep; instead, she took her iPad and read some files about the next meeting.

Bella climbed into bed after turning off the light and leaving only the bedside table lamp. She sat with her back against the headboard, reading an essential file until she lost track of time. Her mind was so calm and away from thinking about Tristan that she could focus on her work.

Later,

She started to yawn several times. Her eyes were so drowsy. But not long after, her cell phone vibrated on the bedside table. When he saw Tristan's name appear there, she frowned.

She checked the time and realized it was already 11.45 PM.

Is it too late to pick up his call?

After a few more seconds, her cell phone still rang, so she decided to pick up his phone call.

"Tristan, why did you call again? It's almost midnight here, and I almost fell asleep."

"Bella, thank god you picked up. This is a video call, by the way..."

"WHAT!?"

Chapter 171: I Have a Fever?

"WHAT!?" Bella shouted in surprise. She quickly pulled out her cell phone and gaped at the screen, shocked to see a shirtless Tristan lying on his bed.

Bella could see his well-defined chest. She could only blink, unable to move or speak.

This was the first time she had seen his chest again in so many years, and the sight brought back all her happy memories. Once more, these memories, these feelings, started to confuse her.

"You look so pretty, Bella," Tristan said, suddenly pulling Bella from her lingering sweet memories with him. She feels like an entire zoo now dancing in her stomach.

She shook her head slightly while turning away her gaze, "T-Tristan, you—" but her voice betrayed her. She couldn't voice what was in her mind at this moment.

Tristan interrupted Bella, noticing her face had turned red. "Bella, are you okay? Are you allergic to something?"

Once more, Bella scolds this shameless Tristan in her mind.

"I'm fine! Maybe. I don't know! But please, Tristan, put on something..." she says without glancing at him at all.

Suddenly, Tristan chuckled when he realized he only wears his pajama pants—he usually sleeps like that.

“Oops, I’m sorry. You know my habit.” he hurriedly apologized and walked to put on his shirt.

As he hurriedly moved away from his bed, the sound of Tristan’s footsteps piqued Bella’s curiosity, leading her to sneak a peek at her phone screen. After only a few seconds, she was shocked to see a familiar piece of furniture in Tristan’s room.

Later,

Tristan’s face appears again. A wide smile graced his face before he continued his words. “Bella, I wear a shirt now. I hope your allergic to my upper body is gone now,” he teased her.

After adjusting her expression, Bella slowly turned back to her cell phone. She saw him lying on the familiar bed. His handsome face is still framed with his loving smile.

“Are you sleeping in the room you said you would dedicate to me?” Bella asked, noticing some familiar furniture — her bedroom in his house.

“Our room, Bella. I didn’t make another room for myself in this house. I sleep in your bedroom, too...”

Bella was at a loss for words hearing his words. She gave him an — are you kidding me? — kind of look.

Gosh! If only she knew, she would never have slept there.

Now Bella understands why she feels his familiar scent on that bed whenever she sleeps in that room. Because he also sleeps there.

This is so embarrassing!

Tristan somehow could catch Bella’s uncomfortable feeling seeing him sleep in that room. He quickly talked about sleeping on the sofa in his office tomorrow if Bella didn’t like him sleeping there.

Bella took a deep breath before saying, “Tristan, please don’t. That’s your house. You can do whatever you want...” She said calmly but made a mental note that she would never sleep there again. Well, at least that’s what she planned to do. But she also believes in the higher power. She cannot predict what God has planned for her life in the future.

“This is our house, Bella. You are still my wife. Well, at least legally...” Tristan wanted to say that, but he held himself back. He didn’t want to scare her in the middle of the night, so he could only smile lovingly at her.

They continued to chat about many other things. But mainly about Tristan's business trip. He told her what he would do in Singapore.

Bella also updated him about her agenda in this city. She also informs him about her energy company, Celebes Energy.

Tristan was surprised to learn that Quantum Capital had become the majority shareholder in Celebes Energy. Although his own company also held shares in Celebes Energy, it was not a majority shareholder. However, he did not mention this fact to Bella, as he noticed her yawning a few times, and her face appeared slightly flushed.

"Are you sleepy? Or are you bored of me? Hahaha..."

"I'm not bored of you, Tristan. But I might for another minute. Kidding. I just need to take my sleep now."

"Alright. Would you mind putting your phone on the bedside table? I want to see you sleep."

"What? No! I don't want you to see me drooling on my pillow or hear me snore. Good night, Tristan!"

Beep!

Bella immediately turned off her cell phone, afraid Tristan might call again.

She turned off all the lights, and the room became completely dark, lit only by the moonlight coming in from the window. She buried herself under the soft blanket and closed her eyes. She falls to sleep in the next five minutes.

The next day.

Bella awoke to the sound of waves crashing and sunlight streaming through the open curtains near her bed.

She checked the clock on her bedside table and was surprised to see that it was already 8 a.m., realizing she had overslept.

'Strange, why didn't Noora wake me up? Did they also wake up late today?' She wondered as she got up from bed.

As soon as she moves her body, she feels aching in all her muscles, as if she had just finished a marathon the day before. She hasn't fully recovered from the shock yet. Her body temperature is so hot that it feels like someone has turned on a heater to the maximum.

"What is this...What is it so hot...Do I have a fever?"

Bella was taken aback when she heard a man's voice come out of her mouth. She cleared her throat and placed her hand on her forehead.

She was speechless when she felt her body temperature getting hotter; she did have a fever.

"Oh my God... why now?" Bella sighed, feeling overwhelmed by her busy schedule. Refusing to believe she had a fever, she forced herself to get up from bed and found her bag.

As a mother with a toddler, she always prepared a few medicines for her and her son, and she remembered she had Ibuprofen* in her bag to reduce her fever.

With the efficiency of a mother, Bella found and immediately drank the medicine. She hopes this fever will not bother her today.

Despite her body aching, she forced herself to get ready for work.

*Ibuprofen: Ibuprofen is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) used to relieve pain from various conditions, such as headaches, dental pain, menstrual cramps, muscle aches, or arthritis. It is also used to reduce fever and to relieve minor aches and pain due to the common cold or flu.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 172: Everyone Knows!

A few minutes later,

Bella finished preparing herself and changed into office clothes. She wore a turtleneck to stay warm, afraid the fever would reappear. She also wore straight trousers because she planned to visit a mining site today.

After grabbing her bag and coat, she rushed to Dax's room to check on him, only to find that her son was not there. The bed was neatly made, and there were no traces of use.

She feels terrible. Her son had already woken up, while she was only waking up now.

'Why didn't Noora wake me up?' She wondered, puzzled. It was strange. Noora was always so disciplined about waking her up at seven for breakfast, especially if she knew she had plans to go to the office.

Bella headed down to the dining table, hoping to find Dax there. Walking to the first floor, she turned on her cell phone. Suddenly, her phone began to vibrate nonstop, and multiple notifications popped up on the screen.

She was stunned.

Her cell phone rarely gets notifications because only certain people know her number. Even when she left the country, she blocked almost all phone contacts in her phone book.

While scrolling, she stopped midway on the stairs. She was curious to know who could have contacted her. Upon seeing that most of them were from Tristan, she couldn't help but smile.

She opened his message to see if he had something important to share.

[Tristan] Good morning, Bella. I hope you sleep well.

[Tristan] I asked Geoffrey not to wake you for breakfast because we were on video calls late at night.

Instantly, Bella's expression turned frosty, knowing the culprit of why Noora didn't wake her up this morning was Tristan Shameless Sinclair.

'Gosh! This man, why would he tell Geoffrey something like that?' Bella vented her frustration in her mind.

Bella was sure that by now, everyone would think her relationship with Tristan was close enough to make video calls until late at night. How shameless!

[Tristan] I'm boarding now. See you and Dax soon. (Love Emoji)

Bella silently chuckled, looking at the emoji he used. She glanced at the time he sent the text two hours ago.

She type to reply to his text,

[Bella] Please inform me when you land.

However, just before she could hit SEND, she heard Dax's voice coming from the bottom of the stairs.

“Good morning, Mommy,” Dax’s cheerful voice put Bella in a good mood again. She rushes to him while admiring his cute beach outfit. He looks adorable in his blue shorts, T-shirt of the same color, hat, and sandals.

“Good morning, my baby. Are you going to the beach now?” she asked, half kneeling to meet his lovely gaze.

“Yes, I am waiting for Aunty Noora. She is going to the kitchen to grab our snacks,” said Dax, his eyes beaming with excitement for food.

“I see. Baby, please keep in mind that you must not go swimming alone. You can only play on the white sandy beach. Also, try not to expose yourself to too much sun, or your skin might get burnt.” Bella expressed her concerns, but Dax smiled slightly in response.

He feels amused, looking at how worried his mother is now.

“Mommy, don’t worry. I know. My teacher will also accompany me...” said Dax, pointing to Geoffrey as he walked towards them. Bella looked at Geoffrey as he stood up.

“Morning, young madam,” Geoffrey greeted Bella politely.

However, Bella suddenly feels embarrassed when she remembers Tristan telling Geoffrey about last night’s video call. She tries to maintain her composure and greets him back.

“Morning Geoffrey. I hear you guys will go to the beach?” She asks casually.

“Yes, ma’am. We’ll accompany the young master to play there and accompany him to do the routine martial arts exercises,” he explained enthusiastically. But Bella felt her heartache when she imagined her son would be physically exhausted.

“Please don’t push Dax too hard, Geoffrey. We’re on vacation,” Bella said in concern. She couldn’t fathom how four-year-olds could learn martial arts.

She always expresses her concerns to Tristan, but he consistently makes excuses, causing her to stop nagging.

“The most important thing is that Dax enjoyed it...” This is one of Tristan’s words that always make her stop nagging and agree. But still, when she saw Dax training, her heart still ached.

Dax smiled reassuringly as he said, “Mommy, my teacher knows the best training for me.”

“Don’t worry, ma’am. I understand your concern. I will make sure young master will have fun and learn at the same time,” Geoffrey said reassuringly. “You should have breakfast now, ma’am. Nick has already prepared it, and the elders are starting without you.”

Bella nods and agrees with him.

She needs to eat breakfast now, as Leo and Sam will arrive to pick her up at 9:30.

Before heading to the dinner table, she ensured Dax enjoyed the activities and reminded him to follow Geoffrey and Noora’s instructions.

“I will, Mom. If I tire, I will let teacher Geoff and Aunty Noora know I need rest. You know me,” Dax said, his smile widening as he tried to reassure his mother.

“Good. I’ll go to the office after breakfast. And maybe come back in the afternoon or evening. I’ll call you later.”

“Okay,” Dax already knew his mother’s schedule.

After seeing Dax and the others go to the beach. Bella headed straight to the dining room.

Bella saw Isaac and Lewis were already there and starting to eat their breakfast. They seemed to be discussing something and didn’t notice her presence.

“Good morning,” she greeted them politely and then asked Nick to bring her breakfast.

Isaac and Lewis were surprised when they heard Bella’s voice and saw her sitting across from them.

“Why do you wake up so early, Bella? Sleep more. I will ask Noora to wake you at nine-thirty,” Isaac said.

Bella, “...”

Lewis placed his coffee cup down and smiled lovingly at Bella. “You should sleep more, dear. I heard you on a video call with my grandson until dawn. You must be exhausted now, right?”

Bella, “...”

‘Tristan Shameless Sinclair, how dare you put me in such an awkward situation?’

Bella could only scold him in her mind while smiling at the elders opposite her.

“Grandpa, you misunderstood,” Bella calmly replied, meeting their gaze. “We only spoke briefly before I fell asleep,” she added, trying to hide her emotions.

She doesn’t want these two grandpas to tease her further.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 173: Surprised to Know His Progress

“Hahaha, it’s alright, don’t be shy. This is a good sign, right, Isaac? Our family will soon be reunited again?” Lewis’s sentence echoed in the room, leaving Bella speechless.

Bella could feel how hot her face was now. And this time, it was not from the fever. She lowered her head and started eating the breakfast that Nick had just served.

The lavish breakfast Nick prepared and the elders’ excellent breakfast company make Bella forget her fever. Or maybe it’s because the medicine is working? She doesn’t care. She enjoyed her breakfast in peace and quiet while listening to these shameless geezers talking about her and Tristan being a couple again.

Gosh!

Shortly after, Nick returned to the dining room to let Bella know that Sam had arrived to pick her up. She immediately excused herself.

“Grandpa,” Bella said as she stood up from her seat. “I will go now. And I’ll probably be back before dinner.” She bowed slightly and left without giving them a chance to say anything.

As Bella walked quickly towards the main entrance, she tried to calm her mind and heart after hearing a conversation between two grandpas.

Bella still couldn’t believe her grandfather had blessed Tristan so quickly. She remembered her grandfather always said he would repeatedly break Tristan’s legs, but now?

When did they become so close? Is it because their houses are next to each other, and Tristan always dines with them?

She feels puzzled.

Soon, Bella remembered that Tristan and her grandfather always chatted without her after dinner.

Bella’s smile became even more sour, guessing that Tristan had won her grandfather’s heart.

Now, she feels suspicious. Tristan not only wins Grandpa, but he is also already getting Aunty Noora, too.

Unbelievable!

'After Dax, he now won Grandpa and Aunty Noora. What nice progress...Tristan Sinclair!' She can't help but feel amused by his determination to win her heart.

Now, she also feels like her heart will soon betray her mind.

...

"Good Morning, Boss," Sam's voice distracted Bella from her own thoughts.

She greeted her before getting into the car and tried to compose herself, not letting the morning's events bring her mood down.

However,

Bella was unable to get away from Leo.

Leo greeted her with unusual cheer and said, "Hello, boss. You look beautiful and charming, as always."

"Thank you for your always uplifting compliment, Leo," Bella said, glancing at the new chauffeur behind the wheel.

"Good morning, Ms. Donovan. I'm Randy from Celebes Energy. I'll be your driver while you stay in this city." The driver greeted her.

"Hello! Good morning. Thank you, Randy... it's nice to meet you," Bella returned the greeting with a smile and then looked at the view outside.

Last night, even though the moon was bright, she couldn't see the view toward the Villa clearly. Now, she was amazed to find their Villa surrounded by tall, lush trees.

"Bella, why is your face slightly red? It looks like you're angry about something..." Leo's voice suddenly broke the silence. "Did something offend you this early?"

Sitting beside the driver, Sam was surprised to hear Leo's words. He looked in the rearview mirror at Bella and saw that her face was a little red.

Bella turns her attention to Leo.

“Leo, you should start considering wearing glasses. I don’t think you could even see my face clearly...” Bella said casually while turning her gaze. She looked at the garden their car passed, and finally, the main gate appeared.

After the car reached the main road, Bella noticed no houses near the Villa. About a mile later, she saw another building.

“Boss, come on, spill the tea. Who offended you?” Leo asked again, but Bella didn’t entertain or answer his curiosity—she could only continue looking outside to ease her mind.

As the car journey continues,

Bella’s silence becomes more pronounced. And Leo acted accordingly. He started to talk about the works. Soon, her mind is preoccupied with the busy schedule that Leo had re-updated for her.

They will visit Celebes Energy’s head office to meet the executives and tour a mining site.

The mining location is quite far from the city, which would be a terrible trip if her fever returned. She would likely be unable to make the two-and-a-half-hour drive.

Soon after, they are driven into the commercial street, and later, the car stops at the Celebes Building. It is a ten-story building with a modern architecture.

As the car halted just outside the entrance, Bella spotted Leo’s secretary, Dana, and the CEO of Celebes Energy, Lucian Bloomdale, waiting for them near the main entrance.

Lucian extends his hand to Bella, “It’s great to meet you in person finally, Ms. Donovan,” he says, surprised by how beautiful she looks.

Bella accepts his handshake and is also surprised to see Lucian. He is so tall and massive—it’s like meeting the Rock in person.

Before long,

They all gather in the executive meeting room, including a few executive directors whom Bella had already met online.

Celebes Energy is a mining company with oil and natural gas mines on the coast south of Nova City. The area is known for its large energy reserves.

Despite having a potentially profitable business, corrupt local government officials prevent companies from maximizing profits.

This practice has been ongoing for years despite the company's attempts to intervene. The officials were well-connected to the capital's military and related government ministry, rendering the company inefficient.

When Andreas Corby was the COO* of Quantum Capital, he made it even worse. He took advantage of the situation to his own benefit. He did nothing to stop the ill practice and the consequent losses and inefficiency.

The company has been operating here for around 20 years; unfortunately, corruption has been a persistent issue.

Even if an old corrupt official retires, a younger one who takes their position continues the cycle. The company loses millions of dollars each year due to these corrupt practices. It's a smooth and tyrannical system that's been going on for too long.

Bella listens to their report calmly and composedly without uttering a single word.

—

*COO = A chief operating officer (COO) is the corporate executive who oversees ongoing business operations within the company. The COO reports to the chief executive officer (CEO) and is usually second-in-command within the company.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 174: Meet Someone She Didn't Want To Meet
After more than one hour of meeting, Lucian finished his report.

"May I have the name of the corrupt official?" Bella finally breaks her silence. She needed the names of the alleged corrupt officials to start her investigation. If she couldn't stop them with subtle means, then she would resort to harsh methods.

And it is up to the corrupt officials what way they want her to use. They can choose!

Lucian explains that they only know the people they are in contact with, not the people behind them. Therefore, he cannot guarantee that any valuable information can be gleaned from them to investigate the mastermind behind the corrupt officials.

"It's fine, Mr. Lucian," Leo replied instead of Bella. When he saw Lucian surprised by his words, he continued, "Well, we just want to know the parties that you have contact with."

Lucian slightly frowned as he saw Leo. Then, he turned his gaze at Bella.

When he saw Bella say nothing but small nods, he immediately asked his secretary to give them the list.

He didn't have much faith in the newly appointed CEO to address the root cause of the company's problems. However, Lucian only needs the head office to be aware of the issue and take matters from his hands as he doesn't have enough resources to deal with it.

...

Bella read the names of five people on the paper. After reading their profiles, she offered the map to Leo beside her and glanced at Lucian, who sat across from her.

"I understand your concern, Mr. Bloomdale," she says, a half smile slowly appearing on her lips. "Unlike the person before you, you and all the gentlemen here already work hard to manage and operate this office and our business in line with shareholders' interest. Let's continue doing so. As for the corrupt official, I will take care of it. You don't need to worry about them. But rest assured, they will stop stealing our company's money..."

Lucian Bloomdale and the other directors were surprised to hear how confident Bella was. They all doubted this young woman's ability to solve such a complex and tremendous matter, but they did not voice their opinions.

Bella could feel their doubts. Even so, she let them pass and said nothing about it.

She would take action to deal with all the corrupt officials who stole her company's money. And she likely had to resort to the hard way.

In essence, there is no way she will close her eyes to this immoral practice!

After the lengthy meeting, Lucas treated Bella and the rest to lunch at a seafood restaurant nearby.

This restaurant is never empty of visitors. As a result, it is challenging to get a seat to eat there, especially if they visit during the lunch or dinner break.

Luckily, Lucian was an excellent administrator. He is well prepared. He had already reserved the VIP room a week early. So they could enjoy their lunch peacefully in the VIP room.

They arrive just after the lunch break, but the restaurant's hall is still full of customers enjoying their lunch.

Upon arriving at the restaurant, the manager recognized Lucian and promptly escorted them to the VIP room.

Bella walks alongside Leo to keep up with Lucian and the other directors. As soon as they reach the VIP room, she takes her seat but feels uneasy and uncomfortable. She starts to experience a slight headache and shivering. The med effect has dissipated, and her fever has returned.

She placed her hand on her cheek, and when she felt her body temperature hot, this worried her. She might cancel her plans to go to the site under such conditions.

After placing their order, Bella excused herself to use the restroom. She needs to splash cold water on her face to cool down and freshen up. Hopefully, the restaurant's restroom is clean and cozy.

Sam, who sat beside Bella, immediately stood up from his seat. He followed her, "Boss, are you okay?" he asked when they left the VIP room.

She stopped and smiled at him, "I'm fine. I just need to go to the restroom and get freshen up..."

"The restroom is over there. Do you want me to guide you there and guard the door?"

"Thank you, Sam. I'll manage it myself." she shook her head and left him.

"Okay, Boss, I will wait here..." Sam stands not far from their VIP room. He is worried about seeing her face and slightly red eyes.

She didn't say much, and she walked towards the restroom in the corner at the end of the corridor.

The corridor looks empty. She is the only one walking toward the restroom.

She quickened her step.

When Bella saw her reflection in the mirror, she was surprised. With one glance, someone would know she was not well, as her cheeks and eyes looked red.

'Looks like I can't go to the site this time...' she wondered. She felt terrible about canceling this schedule because she knew Lucian was excited to show them the newly updated mine.

She took a deep sigh before splashing her cheeks with cold water.

After ensuring her face looked much fresher, she immediately left the bathroom.

She needs to drink some medicine to reduce her fever and headache as she starts to feel the back of her neck up to her head feels tight.

When she comes out, someone calls her name. Instantly, her step stops when she recognizes the familiar voice—it is her brother, Henry Donovan.

...

“Sis Bella!? Oh my god, is this really you? What are you doing here?” Henry Donovan was surprised to see Bella in this city.

After they last met, he hated her because she had vanished without even visiting their family house.

What Henry hears is that Bella is now moving to the capital. But he hated her even more because his grandpa moved to the capital, likely because he wanted to get closer to her.

Henry is jealous of her because Bella is the only person who has made Grandpa decide to move to the capital.

‘Gosh! Looks like my luck for today has run out. How could I avoid him in this small aisle?’

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 175: Father Found You A New Husband

‘Gosh! Looks like my luck for today has run out. How could I avoid him in this small aisle?’

Instead of answering his question, she asked him, “What are you doing here?”

Henry frowned, clearly showing that he disliked how she responded.

“What else would I want to be in this boring part of the city if not for work,” he said. “And you?!” he asked again.

“Work? What kind of business does Donovan Group have in this place?” Bella is starting to feel suspicious of this brat.

“Why do you want to know?” Henry is slightly annoyed that this girl still hasn’t answered his first question, even though he asked it first.

"Please pretend you didn't see me here. Goodbye!" Bella said, then walked away, leaving Henry feeling increasingly angry.

Henry chased after her, shouting, "Stop right there, you bitch!" He blocked her path and continued, "I'm not finished talking to you, little sister." He ran his fingers through his hair, feeling his anger boil as he glared at her.

Bella let out a deep sigh as she looked at the clueless man before her. He seemed oblivious to the fact that she didn't want to talk to him. If she didn't have a fever, or at least felt better, she would have taught him a lesson, but her body was shivering, and her head was slightly dizzy. She needed her medicine.

"I don't have time to talk to you. Step aside, or I—"

"Or what? You want to kick me?" Henry interrupted her words. He laughed when he saw her annoyed look. He feels amused by her courage. "Don't challenge me, Bella. I haven't hit any girl or woman since you left home...so don't make me hit you again, ok!?"

Bella's hands clenched tightly as her memories of the past started to surface again in her mind when Henry physically bullied her when he thought she had received more attention from their grandparents than him. Bella realizes bullying is one of Henry's traits. She clearly remembered how his older brother had also bullied his classmates, especially those who were small and nerdy.

She had already forgotten those painful memories of being bullied by Henry. Still, this man—how dare he remind her again? How dare he unlock the dark memories she had long buried in her mind? The memories she wanted to forget for the rest of her life.

Before Bella could express her anger, Henry interrupted her.

"We attempted to call you, but your cell phone was inactive. It seems like you have blocked all of your family's phone numbers. Give me your new number! Our father wants to speak with you. You should never turn your back on your family! A woman should obey her family's wishes!" Henry demanded, attempting to intimidate Bella with his sharp gaze. However, Bella remained unfazed.

"DO NOT patronize me, Henry! I haven't had a cell phone since returning to this country. And my old number is also inactive..." Her traumatic memories of dealing with Henry cause Bella to make random excuses.

In her mind, Bella knows precisely why she doesn't share her contact number with her family. She doesn't see anything positive from sharing her contact number with them. It's more likely that they will cause problems and bring negative vibe to her life. So, in her good judgment, it's best to avoid them since she separated from Tristan.

Furthermore, if there's anything important regarding her family, she still has her grandfather to inform her.

Bella's random excuse upset Henry. He even gasped in disbelief that someone in this century didn't own a cell phone.

'This bitchy little sister of mine! How dare she make fun of me!? The older brother she supposed to respect!' Henry scolded her in his mind before saying,

"Bella, you think I'm going to believe that? Tch! How dare you block our parents' phone numbers. You ungrateful girl. No wonder Tristan Sinclair never loved you. You are such a terrible woman!"

Bella, "..."

She started wishing Tristan was here and told her idiot brother how he felt about her.

Because she didn't want to prolong her conversation with Henry, she asked, "HENRY. Tell me what you need. Tell me now, or step aside!" Bella said impatiently.

Henry had to tell this stubborn girl about their father's arrangement since she refused to give him her phone number.

"Father mentioned that he has found a potential new husband for you!"

Bella was dumbfounded. Had she misheard? A new husband? Is her father and brother still thought today a medieval era? She couldn't help but curse inwardly.

"Do you remember Uncle Bradley? I bet you still remember him. He owns Dawson Supermart. Well, a few months ago, his wife passed away. When Uncle Bradley heard you've been divorced for five years, he immediately asked Father if he could marry you. Father knew that you would be willing to accept, so he agreed to the proposal. Father wants you to come back home and talk about it..."

Bella, "..."

'Oh my goodness... Why do I have such a shameless father?'

It never occurred to Bella that her father tried to set her up with someone else. This time, he wanted to match her to a man his own age.

She needs to make an official declaration to sever ties with her father. Otherwise, her father will continue to do something funny behind her back.

“Are you kidding, right?” Bella asked Henry, narrowing her eyes.

“Why do you think I would make up such a story? Just to fool you? Of course, what I told you is true. That’s why I’m asking for your phone number so our father can talk to you. And please also give me your address. Our mother really misses you and would like to meet you.”

Once again, Bella’s body shivered. She couldn’t tell if it was due to her fever or her boiling anger towards Henry’s words and her father’s new evil plan.

Bella could feel the eternal flame burning in her heart.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 176: His Powerful Slap

Once again, Bella’s body shivered. She couldn’t tell if it was due to her fever or her boiling anger towards Henry’s words and her father’s new evil plan.

Bella could feel the eternal flame burning in her heart hearing Henry’s words as she said.

“Henry Donovan, tell your father... I no longer considered him as my father. I don’t need anybody’s help to look for a husband. I could find one for myself. And you, there is no need to address me as your sister anymore. In my eyes and my mind, you are no longer my big bro! And I know it would be easy for you to accept that because you NEVER ACT LIKE ONE!”

Henry gasped, shocked at her daring words.

She wanted to sever a tie with us!?

This bitch!!

It looks like this little bitch asked to be beaten, right?

How could she so casually suggest breaking off from the family?

Has she gone crazy?

Henry couldn’t believe it. This timid girl had changed 180 degrees — she dared to speak and had confidence.

“You bitch—” Henry’s face turned red instantly as if all the blood was now rushing to his face. He was outraged to hear Bella’s arrogant words.

“Don’t get in my way,” Bella snarled, fixing her cold gaze on Henry. She felt ashamed to share blood with him.

“Look’s like you really need to taste my slap like when we were kids, bitch!” Henry said. An evil grin frames his smug face before he raises his hand and slaps Bella. “You, bitch...” his words trail off when his hand hangs in the air—he can’t move his hand—someone holds it.

Henry looked over his shoulder and was surprised to see a tall man with short, military-style hair standing behind him. The man gripped his hand tightly. He tried to free his hand, but the man’s strength was not his match.

The more Henry tried to pull his hand away, the tighter the man’s grip became. He started to feel his hands hurt as if his bones were being crushed; the excruciating pain caused his face to turn red.

“What the hell, Man! Let go of my hand! Who are you anyway? Mind your own business! How dare you interfere in my family affairs?” Henry roared, veins popping out on his forehead.

The man didn’t bother to answer Henry. His cold gaze slowly turned warm as he looked at Bella. In his polite tone, he asked, “Are you okay?”

“Let go of his hand, Sam. I’m fine,” Bella answered, smiling at Sam.

Bella was glad Sam showed up at the right time—right before this shameless Henry slapped her. What excellent timing!

“What do you want me to do with this trash, Boss!?” Sam asked casually, but Henry, who heard his words, felt even more angry.

‘TRASH!? How dare this man call me that?’ Henry was about to open his mouth to scold this big man, but he almost vomited blood when he heard Bella’s words.

Bella glances at Sam and repeatedly blinks to signal him to follow her plan. Luckily, Sam witnessed how she punished Andreas Corby, so he immediately knew what she wanted.

“Even though this man’s slap didn’t hit me, I felt traumatized...” Bella said in a sad and frightening tone as she lowered her eyes, trying to hold back laughter when she saw Henry’s shocked expression.

After a pause of a few seconds, Bella continued her words, “You can do anything with his hands, such as... breaking his fingers or twisting his arms, so that he can’t hit women again in the future. This man is a menace to our civil society.”

“Go it, Boss! Please return to your table. It would be best if you didn’t witness what I’m about to do to this white trash...” Sam said, grinning as he pinned Henry against the wall to give Bella space to walk past him.

Henry was left speechless and started to fear his fate when he was forcefully pushed to the wall and unable to move. He cursed inwardly, frightened by this man pushing him hard against the wall. He could feel that this big man was not just anyone; he may be a military or martial arts expert, and judging from the way he talked to Bella, it seemed this man was her bodyguard.

Henry clenched his teeth, angry, as he tried to figure out how to convince the man to let him go without making the big man even madder at him. After thinking for a while, he planned to offer him much money.

“Don’t worry about the consequences, Sam. I’ll erase your trail so you can do whatever you want.” Bella smiles at Sam and then mockingly at Henry before walking away.

After several steps, she pulled out her cell phone. She had a moment of hesitation, like a second, before finally dialing Stefan’s number.

Bella talked with Stefan for a few minutes. She asked him to delete all the CCTV footage from around the area in this restaurant, including hacking Henry’s cell phone and cloning it.

As Bella walked towards the VIP room, she muttered, ‘Do you want to hit me again, brother? Over my dead body.’

Before she enters the VIP room, Bella tries to forget her shock at her father’s audacity in finding her a new husband.

She will deal with him later.

Upon re-entering the VIP room, Bella was surprised to find the food had already been served. However, no one eats. Everyone seemed to be waiting for her. She felt terrible and could only offer a smile of apology before taking her seat.

Leo leaned closer to Bella and whispered, “That’s an unusually long restroom excuse, Boss. What took you so long? Are you okay?” He noticed her red eyes and tired expression.

“Yeah. I’m great,” Bella whispered to Leo casually, ignoring her ache. Then, she fixed her gaze on Lucian and the three Directors having lunch with them.

“Gentlemen, please enjoy your lunch...” she politely said as she began to eat. However, the Honey-Grilled Prawns she loved tasted bland.

She secretly took a deep breath, waiting for the opportunity to take the badly needed med.

As everyone started to eat and stopped paying attention to her, Bella reached for her Birkin bag, took out two Ibuprofen pills, and swallowed them with water. She has decided to cancel her trip to the mining site because she feels her body won’t handle it. Instead, Leo will be sent in her place.

She needs to go to the hospital to receive a Vitamin C IV injection; otherwise, she will take longer to recover and make her family worry about her condition.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 177: Rushing To The Hospital

After lunch, Bella left with Sam to go to the hospital. At the same time, Leo, who represents Bella, visits the mining site with his secretary, Dana.

As soon as she entered the car, she felt her surroundings spinning.

She closed her eyes and tried to sleep while sitting.

“Boss, you can lay and sleep...” Sam said after he saw her massage her forehead.

“Hmm,” Bella lay while closing her eyes. “Please drive faster...to any nearby hospital.” She rarely falls ill, but she feels utterly drained when she does.

“Yes, Boss...” Sam said and drove. He looked calm, but in his heart, he was worried. While driving, he kept glancing in the rearview mirror to check her condition.

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Promise Hospital.

Bella was stunned when she woke and saw they were at Promise Hospital – Sean’s family hospital.

She didn’t want to be admitted to this hospital, primarily because Amanda Spencer, Sean’s aunt, had already issued Spencer’s Black Card for her. She worried that Amanda could trace her admission to this hospital and cause unwanted attention from Sean’s family.

“Sam, this is the near hospital?” Bella asked while holding back the discomfort she felt.

“Yes. We need to drive about 20 minutes to get to another hospital. Do you want to go to another hospital?”

After looking at her watch, she saw it was almost 3 pm. If she went again to another hospital, it would delay her time back to the beach house even more.

‘It might be the best choice if you want to see Dax soon, Bella. Let’s be brave...’

Bella finally decided to choose this hospital, hoping it wouldn’t attract any unnecessary attention from the Owner. Bella pushed herself to accept that the hope was reasonable because this hospital was far from the capital, and Amanda Spencer likely would not notice. That is, as long as Bella did not use her black card.

“No need. Let’s go...” Bella said, then exited the car.

They went straight to the emergency room after Sam finished the administrative matters.

Bella was impressed by the efficient administrative service at the hospital. Sam only needed to show her ID card, and the process was complete in just two minutes.

Bella was even more impressed by how quick and caring the nurses handled her. They took her to the emergency room while ensuring she was comfortable and in good hands; this was her first experience going to an emergency room.

After a brief wait, the staff talked to the nurse on duty, who led her to a tiny one-bedroom room in a corner with a good view.

The room appeared to be reserved for VIP patients. She wondered if Sam had admitted her as a VIP patient, but her headache returned, so she set her questions aside. She needed to lie down on the bed.

As Bella lay on the bed, the nurse took her temperature and was shocked by the result.

“Ms. Donovan, your temperature is high. We need to get it down as soon as possible. I will put the medicine through your IV tube to speed up the process,” said the concerned nurse.

Bella could already guess it because she felt her body heat like a fire burning inside and on her skin. She smiled, although the smile was limited on her lips and didn’t show through her eyes as she endured the pain.

“Yes, please. Nurse... can you also inject vitamin C for me? And, just to let you know, I also have a headache, pretty bad...” She said helplessly.

"I will consult with the doctor about your information. He will check your condition shortly, mam. But for now, what we do is lower your fever first," the nurse explained.

"Okay. I trust you know better. Thank you," Bella said calmly, even though she was worried inwardly. She doesn't like IV needles. However, for now, she had no choice. She needs to feel better soon and return to the beach house.

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The way the nurse set up and put the IV tube on her was magnificent. She felt no pain at all. Within minutes, the med is making her sleep.

Four hours later,

Bella opened her eyes and saw a nurse beside her, checking her IV. As she fully opened her eyes, the nurse told her the doctor had given her vitamin C and a few other medicines to expedite her recovery when she was asleep. She should be feeling much better now. After the nurse finished checking, she left.

And the nurse was right. Bella no longer feels hot or sore or pain in her head and shoulder. Her body feels lighter. This condition relieved her. She could return soon to the beach house.

When Bella looked up at the clock on the wall, she was surprised to realize that she had slept so long. Glancing around the corner, she noticed Sam immersed in his phone.

"Sam..."

"Thank goodness, Boss, you're finally awake," Sam said with delight.

He had waited for four hours while she slept, worrying about her condition. Fortunately, the doctor had informed him that Bella was alright but had fatigue syndrome, possibly due to excessive work or stress. The doctor had advised her to rest and take it easy for a while.

"Sorry to make you worry, Sam..." Bella tries to sit up, causing Sam to rush to help. After she sat, she asked Sam about her condition.

He immediately explained again to her.

"No wonder my body has been feeling mad lately," Bella said with a smile and a shake of her head as she listened to Sam's explanation.

“Boss, don’t force yourself to work too hard. You haven’t been to work for years, and when you start being active again quickly, your mind and body might be shocked...” Sam said in a still worried tone.

Bella, “....”

Why are his words so on point?

“Boss, the doctor also said if you still have a fever for the next three days, the doctor advised you to return to the hospital for a blood check.”

Bella shuddered at the thought of the needle piercing her skin once more to draw her blood.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 178: Amanda Spencer Found Bella!

Bella shuddered at the thought of the needle piercing her skin once more to draw her blood.

She felt that giving birth was already enough of an ordeal, with all the procedures and having to stay overnight at the hospital. She made a mental note to avoid returning to this hospital again in the future.

“Does he prescribe any medicine for me?” She couldn’t focus earlier due to a headache when the doctor spoke to her.

“Of course, I have already put all your medicine and vitamins in your bag. And also settle the hospital administration and charge. Boss, would you like to stay here or go back?”

“Back to the Villa, of course!” Bella said firmly.

“Okay. Let’s get out of here,” Sam smiled as he called the nurse to ask them to remove the IV needle.

A few minutes after the nurse removed all the IV tubes from Bella’s hands, the doctor who had previously examined her returned and informed her about the medical treatment she needed to do at home. Shortly after, the doctor and the nurse thanked her for choosing their hospital and wished her a speedy recovery.

“Thank you, Doctor,” Bella replied with a genuine smile.

After the doctor left, Bella took her long coat and bag and followed Sam out of the hospital.

Meanwhile, a black Maybach was parked in front of the Promise Hospital lobby. A woman in her mid-forties stared unblinkingly at the lobby door, excited as she waited for someone to appear.

Before long,

“So, that woman is Arabella Donovan?” Her sweet voice echoed in the car, and her eyes caught sight of Bella walking with Sam.

“Yes, ma’am. The woman is Miss Donovan, and the man beside her is her driver. At least that’s what our informant tells us...” The man sitting next to the driver answered.

“She looks beautiful. And intelligent, too,” the woman said, her lips curving into a smile.

“Miss Arabella Donovan is indeed beautiful and intelligent,” the man said. “Master Sean has chosen a perfect future wife.”

The woman sighed deeply before responding to his assistant, “Please, don’t assume she will be part of my family. It’s not that easy, especially being Sean’s wife.”

The man chuckled, “If you still have doubts about her background, why do you issue a black card for her? You know how exclusive that card was, right?” he rhetorically asked.

“I am curious about the woman who made Sean ask for an absurd request. She was an outsider, yet she had access to my family’s private card. My nephew is quite independent, especially after serving in the military, so I rarely receive requests for a favor from him. When he asked me for this favor, I couldn’t reject it. But I also couldn’t help but wonder who this woman was.”

The man smiled faintly before he asked again, “Ms. Spencer, and now that you have seen her, are you going to cancel her black card?”

“No. I want to see how long this woman can restrain herself from using that card. Because since this girl received the card, she has never used it; even when she was admitted to this hospital, she also didn’t use it. If I had not created an alarm every time her name and identity number entered Spencer’s Group’s system server, I would not have known she had been admitted to one of our hospitals.”

Amanda Spencer is amused with what she is doing now. She is too curious about Sean’s girlfriend, so she abandons her work in the capital and rushes to fly to this city, only to catch a glimpse of her.

“Okay,” the man said, looking at Amanda Spencer. “Ma’am, should we stay here or return to the capital?”

Amanda Spencer pondered momentarily as she watched the car Bella was driving disappear from her line of sight. After a while, she looked at her most trusted and reliable assistant with a faint smile, she said,

“Let’s go back to the capital. I should meet my sister-in-law and give her some information about Sean’s future wife. She will be excited.”

Amanda’s eyes lit up at the thought of her sister-in-law finally having a daughter-in-law after asking Sean to get married for so long. Still, Sean always refused or avoided talking about it.

At the same time, in the car driven by Sam. Bella felt much better than before when she was going to the hospital. At that time, she couldn’t even open her eyes because her head hurt so much.

Bella gazed at the beautiful night scenery of Nova City, with lights twinkling along the streets, her smile illuminating her face.

However, a moment later, she remembered her cell phone. Bella looked for it in her bag but couldn’t find it.

“Sam, have you seen my cell phone?”

“I found your phone in your coat pocket. Earlier, it kept ringing, and I was worried it would disturb your rest, so I turned it off. I even turned my phone off, too. I don’t want anyone unnecessarily worried if I told them I was in the hospital,” Sam explained while looking at Bella in the rearview mirror with a look of guilt and worry. “So, no one knows you were in the hospital, Boss. I’m sorry if that troubled you...boss,” He muttered softly.

“No worries, Sam. You did the right thing. If Aunty Noora or Grandpa asked me, I had an excuse that I couldn’t be contacted because my cell phone battery ran out, and I didn’t have time to charge it. And so did you.” Bella said with a reassuring smile.

Bella turned on her cell phone and immediately received many short messages and pending emails, which vibrated nonstop for several minutes.

She was no longer surprised when she saw the missed calls from her son, Noora, and grandfather.

But what surprised her was the missed call from Tristan’s number. When she checked, there were 23 missed calls from Tristan. It would’ve been more if Sam hadn’t turned her phone off.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 179: Tristan Flew To Nova City

'He made that many calls in a few hours? Why? Does he know I'm in the hospital, and he's worried?' Bella wondered. Her heart trembled slightly as she opened the application to read a short message from him.

[Tristan] I called you, but you didn't pick up. Please answer, Bella...

[Tristan] Bella, are you alright? It's been a few minutes, but you haven't answered my message, and my calls haven't been answered either.

[Tristan] Why do I feel worried about you? Did something happen? Please answer me...
(Sad Emoji)

[Tristan] Bella, please answer. (Worry Emoji)

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Tristan sent many other similar messages. Anyone who saw his message would've reached the same conclusion as Bella's. The sender has a possessive trait. Despite feeling uneasy with this possessive side of him, Bella was also amused. Deep down, she felt her heart warm, knowing someone sincerely cared and worried about her.

She didn't know how to react. Should she feel happy? Or should she be worried because this man was starting to show possessiveness, even though they were not yet husband and wife?

Bella continued reading Tristan's short messages, and when she read the last few, her eyes suddenly widened.

[Tristan] I was worried about you. Our son called me and said he couldn't reach you, either.

[Tristan] Bella, I sincerely apologize for asking Max to track your location. I know you ended up in Promise Hospital.

Bella swallowed silently. At the same time, she continued to read the message from him.

[Tristan] I'm on the plane. I will fly directly to Nova City to meet you and our son.

[Tristan] I'll be there soon... (Love Emoji)

Bella's heartbeat raced as she read Tristan's last text. She immediately wanted to stop him, but when she looked at the time, his last text message had come fifteen minutes before.

Her shoulders slumped.

'He must have been on the plane by now...' she smiled wryly. She gazes out the window, praying that Tristan won't tell Dax about her hospitalization. Or her brilliant son will be frightened.

Several times, Bella took deep breaths.

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When Bella arrived at the beach house, she saw Noora and Dax pacing in front of the door. She immediately regretted texting Noora that she was on her way home, making them wait for her outside while the night wind was freezing cold.

After asking Sam to return to the beach villa, Bella adjusts her expression to show a calm and relaxed face before stepping out of the car. She approaches Dax, who runs toward her with a worried and curious expression.

"Baby, why are you waiting for mommy out here? It is freezing. Let's get inside!"

Bella immediately picks him up. To her surprise, Dax doesn't refuse; instead, he gives her a koala hug by wrapping his arms around her neck and leaning his head on her shoulder. While this amuses her, she also feels sad because she realizes her son must have been very worried about her throughout the evening.

Since giving birth to her son, she had never been away without speaking to him for more than four hours. Even when she started working at Quantum Capital, Dax always stayed in touch with her through texts, video calls, or phone calls, and she never missed any of those. So she could understand Dax's worry.

"Babby, are you worried about mommy?" She whispered in his ear, tightening her grip as she carried him inside.

"Hmmm... Mommy, I'm worried something terrible has happened to you. It's unusual for you to ignore my calls or not call me back..." Dax's soft voice sounded in Bella's ear.

He continued, "And I couldn't resist waiting for you outside when Aunty said you were on your way home, Mommy."

Instantly, Bella felt a mix of emotions. She felt guilty for causing her son to worry, but she was also grateful that Tristan hadn't informed Dax that she had been admitted to the hospital.

"Miss, let me carry Dax," Noora approached Bella. "You just had a very long, exhausting day. You must get some very needed rest," she continued with concern.

Bella glanced at Noora. "It's okay, Noora. I already forgot my exhaustion when I carried Dax." She smiled, remembering how Dax usually would refuse if she or anyone else tried to hold him like a baby.

"Mommy... would you mind putting me down? I want to walk and hold your hand," Dax suddenly said. And his tone was calm but firm. Bella sensed there was no longer any worry in his voice.

"Are you sure you don't want Mom to carry you to the living room?" Bella tries to tease him.

"Yes, please. What Aunt Noora said is true. Mother must be tired..."

Bella complied with Dax's wishes without saying anything. She felt the weight of her growing son, making her waist feel crushed.

"Okay, I know you might feel embarrassed..." Bella said while ruffling his soft hair, trying to tease him. However, Dax looked at her with his adorable pout. She held back her laughter, but when she met his blue eyes, she suddenly froze, reminding her of someone who was now rushing to fly here and causing her heart to beat faster again.

She tries to distract her mind from Tristan as she walks again to the living room.

"Are you okay, Bella?" As she entered the living room, her grandfather and Lewis Sinclair asked, concern etched on their faces.

Bella greeted them with a smile. "Grandpa, Grandpa Lewis, I'm okay. While at the mining site, I discovered that my cell phone battery had died. I could only charge it while in the car on my way home. I apologize if I caused anyone to worry."

"Okay, we're just concerned. We're unable to get in touch with Sam either," Isaac explained.

"Hahaha," Lewis laughed. "No need to apologize, Bella. The important thing is that you're back and fine," he said.

Bella sat on the sofa beside Dax and nodded as they spoke.

Before she could ask about dinner, suddenly, Geoffrey entered the living room and announced that it was ready.

She excused herself to clean up first and rushed upstairs to change her clothes before joining them.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 180: Deep Talk With Dax

After dinner, Bella and Dax chatted in his room. Dax lay on the bed while Bella sat beside him, leaning against the headboard. She played with her son's soft hair, listening attentively as he recounted his day.

Dax excitedly spoke of his time training with Geoffrey while playing in the white sand. After that, he returned home and rested. They decided not to venture outside after lunch due to the sun's intense heat. However, they boarded a boat at noon and set off for a fishing trip.

"Fishing was so much fun, Mom. I caught a fish today!" Dax's eyes beamed enthusiastically, but his expression slowly changed a few seconds later.

"Huh? What's wrong, baby? Why do you look so sad?" Bella sat straight up, concerned that something had happened to him.

"I only caught one fish for the whole day, while the others could catch plenty of fish. I wish Dad were here. I want to go fishing with Dad..." Dax took a deep breath as he turned his gaze to the ceiling.

Bella's worries slowly disappeared; She thought something else made him sad.

She softly rubbed his cheek to make him see her in the eyes before she said, "If Daddy is here, we can go fishing and catch as many fish as you want. There is no need to be sad."

"Really?" The light in his eyes beamed.

"Yes, baby..."

"I hope Dad comes back sooner..." Dax said excitedly. However, his expression changed once again. This time, his eyes flashed with worry.

Bella was confused when she saw how quickly his expression changed again. It was rare for Dax to show her so much emotion. He usually looked calm.

"Mommy..." Dax's blue eyes blinked several times as he looked at Bella. She could see the anxiety there, starting to worry her.

“What is it, Dax!?”

“When I couldn’t reach you on your phone, and you didn’t respond to my text message, I decided to call Dad,” Dax explained. He paused momentarily to see his mother’s reaction before continuing, “I feel bad... because when I called, Dad was sleeping. He sounded worried about you, too. I’m sorry, Mom. I know that because of me, Dad will worry about you too...”

Bella smiled and said, “It’s okay, Baby. I’m not angry. Besides, Daddy already told Mommy that you called him...”

Dax smiled again when he knew his mother wasn’t angry with him.

“Okay, it’s time to sleep, Dax. It’s almost ten,” Bella said as she got up from bed. She helped fix Dax’s blanket before turning off the lights. “Good night, Baby. Don’t forget to dream about me. I love you...”

“I will... Love you more.”

Bella smiled even wider after hearing his sweet reply. Glancing once more at Dax, she immediately closed the door.

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When she was alone in her bedroom, the first thing she did was find her bag. After taking medicine and vitamins, she walked to the sofa and tried to call Leo. She feels terrible about letting him go to the mining site alone; now, she must hear his report.

Bella was about to dial Leo’s number when her cell phone vibrated, and Leo’s name appeared.

She was amused by the coincidence that Leo called her first, “Hello Leo, are you back!?”

“Yes. I arrived two hours ago. Bella, how are you? Are you feeling better now?” Leo asked worriedly.

When Leo arrived at the Villa two hours ago and noticed Sam’s car, concerned about Bella’s condition, he searched for Sam to ask about her health. Unfortunately, Sam was already fast asleep.

After failing to get any info from Sam, Leo texts Bella a few times, but she doesn’t reply. He has no choice but to call her, even though it’s already late at night.

“I feel much better now. I don’t think my fever will come back. Please don’t worry about me. I’m just feeling tired and stressed because I can’t stop thinking about the bitch

Laura Kiels and Andreas Corby. I know you're concerned, but I'll be okay..." Bella said, attempting to lighten the mood. She could sense Leo's worry from his words and tone.

"Thank God! When I was at the mining site, I wanted to return to the villa as soon as possible to check on you. But Sam sent me a message that you were alright and fell asleep after they injected you with medicine."

"Mmm... I only need a few hours of sleep and feel much better now. Tell me about your site visit."

Leo informed Bella about his visit to the mining site. After that, he suddenly remembered something important they needed to discuss. He told her about Laura Kiels, who appears too bold in attacking Stellar Entertainment on social media through her paid A-Netz buzzers.

Laura Kiels' paid digital army keeps blaming Stellar Entertainment for her withdrawal from the industry. He also informed her that a few hours ago, the new CEO of Stellar called him and requested a meeting with Bella to discuss this matter. The CEO wanted to sue them all, but the legal team was against it.

"Boss, I think you have delayed solving this problem too long. I'm worried this problem will impact our other businesses if you delay more." Leo said worriedly.

'Can that bitch wait a bit until I return to the capital? Why does she look so rushed? Why are you so rushed, Laura Kiels?' Bella silently took a deep breath.

"Leo, there's no need to worry about that woman. She will face the consequences of her actions soon enough. You can also inform the new CEO, and we'll discuss everything further when we return." Bella said calmly, but Leo still found her response inadequate.

Leo expressed helplessness to Bella, stating that the company had been under coordinated attack by paid A-Netz buzzers. The fake news and misinformation campaign blaming the company for Laura Kiels' termination has made the trending list on several social media platforms.

"Leo, why aren't you as sharp as usual? You should know my strategy, right!?" Bella asked. When she heard him take a deep breath on the other end, she chuckled before continuing, "Geez! You don't seem to focus on your work. What happened?"

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 181: Please Don't Get Sick Again

"Bella, I apologize for being slightly distracted with my family matters," Leo said.

“Leo, I’m sorry to hear that,” Bella suddenly felt worried. Tell me about your family matters. Maybe I could help you resolve them,” She sincerely offered help.

Leo chuckled, “Thank you, Bella, but I don’t want to burden your already bustling life more. Also, I don’t want you to get sick again, hahaha....Anyway, I think it would be best if I handled it alone. So, I will handle it by myself...”

For a few seconds, Bella was silent.

“If you say so. But, promise me something. Promise me that if you need my help, you will never hesitate to ask, okay?”

“Yes, I promise,” Leo smiled faintly before he continued, “Boss, thanks for making my mind clear, and my heart feels light again. Now, back to the topic, I know what you did. You let them continue to troll us because you wanted to collect evidence against them, right?”

“Now, this is the Leo that I know of—a great observant and analyst. Yes, you are right. While they troll us, I secretly gather any evidence for our comprehensive retaliation. We don’t do things halfway.” A confident smile slowly emerges from her beautiful face.

She continues, “Once I get enough evidence to throw them in prison, I will slowly release the evidence of that bitch’s dark past and dark attitude to the public through anonymous third or even fourth parties that are impossible to be traced back to me. You know Leo, when I retaliate, I will ensure it will damage her reputation so much that she could never return to this country’s entertainment industry.” Bella said casually.

However, Leo, who listened to every word Bella said with great attention, couldn’t help but fear and praise her simultaneously. ‘Now you are back, Bella... merciless to anyone who tries to mess with you! I would never want to be your enemy.’

A cold smile appeared on the corners of Bella’s lips before she continued, “And my retaliation is not limited to Laura Kiels. Her manager will have a similar fate. He, too, will suffer my retribution...”

Bella still remembered how Laura’s manager tried embarrassing her and Leo at Moon Coffee a few weeks ago. She wouldn’t let him go just like that.

Leo chuckled softly before saying, “Bella, you know what? This is the same Bella I knew when we met in college and when you, Jack, and Harper built the RDF Group. You have never let people get away when they have messed with you.”

“Is that so!? I don’t remember that.” Bella smiles faintly. Her mind is blurry about her past self.

“Boss, you were and are still the most amazing woman I have ever met. You could have become a successful woman if you continued to pursue your career after college. It really surprised me when you suddenly disappeared from us. I have always thought that if you had continued to thrive in the business world, you would have become this country’s most powerful businesswoman...”

Just hearing Leo’s words was enough to make Bella smile bitterly because what Leo said was true. She abandoned her youthful dreams because her love for Tristan blinded her.

What Bella hated about her past was that her feelings overpowered her common sense. She was willing to accept when her in-laws and parents tried to manipulate her and often verbally abused her.

This is what she is trying to fix now. She will not return to her past self.

Even if she falls in love with Tristan or another man again, she will never allow her heart to be blinded by her love for them.

She will never allow her feelings to cloud her judgment again.

She will never allow someone to manipulate or abuse her again.

Never!

“Leo, what you said was true. But I don’t like to dwell in the past, so I hope you do the same. I’m returning now, so let’s only talk about the present and the future.”

“Consider it done, Boss. I’m sorry if my melancholic words annoyed you. I just want to say that you are still young and have plenty of time to achieve your goals, Boss.”

“I see. Do you think I have a chance to be as amazing as you said before? I mean, to succeed in my career in this industry? Well, at least to achieve what Jack expects us to achieve!?” she asked.

“Of course! As long as I’m on your team, I can guarantee that. Hahaha. Let’s make Jack’s targets a success!” Leo’s firm response made her laugh.

“Hahaha....great way to guarantee long-term employment with me, Leo. Thanks for the laugh, though.”

“Hahaha, you are welcome...I like working for you.”

Leo continues, “But Bella... please don’t get sick again. Don’t take all the company’s burdens upon yourself. I’ve felt guilty lately because you’ve been handling everything while I’ve had plenty of time to do nothing. If you continue to do so in the future, you

might as well fire me. There's no point in me being your senior secretary in the company..." Leo said seriously.

Leo had wanted to say this a few times but was always reluctant because Bella seemed to enjoy what she was doing. However, after seeing her sick from exhaustion, he couldn't help but express his thoughts.

Bella's heart warmed when she heard Leo's words. She knew how caring and concerned Leo was for her.

"Thank you, Leo..." she faintly said. "You better prepare yourself to work even harder in the future; you might not have time to rest. And you can't complain to me. At least don't expect me to listen. Hahaha."

"Hahaha, yeah. I get it, Boss. I've asked for it, anyway."

Even though Bella wanted to say more, she felt drowsy — her medicine's effects were starting to kick in.

Bella ended the phone call and told Leo they would continue discussing the work tomorrow.

Once she turns off the lights and her cell phone, she lies on the bed and effortlessly sleeps for only a few minutes.

And she was sleeping like a baby.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 182: Tristan Arrive At The Beach House
Next morning.

It was almost seven o'clock. Noora hurriedly walked to the main villa. She wants to go straight upstairs to Dax's room to wake him.

However, just as Noora was about to ascend the stairs, her steps halted when she saw a man with fast, steady, and graceful strides approaching her.

Noora's brow furrowed slightly as the man drew nearer, and his face became more apparent. Instantly, she gasped in shock as she recognized that the tall, elegant, and handsome figure was none other than Master Tristan Sinclair.

“W-What? What’s happening?” Noora muttered softly, taken aback by what she saw. “How come I see Master Tristan here? Shouldn’t he be in Singapore and only arriving here a couple of days from now?”

Noora blinked several times, trying to assure herself that what she witnessed was merely her imagination.

“Am I dreaming?” She whispered.

However, Tristan drew closer, and Noora heard his charming voice.

“Good morning, Noora. Why did you look stunned like that? Is there something wrong?” Tristan asks rhetorically and casually, walking past her and ascending to the second floor.

“Heavens! Is that you, Master Tristan? How? I mean, weren’t you supposed to be in Singapore?” Noora hurriedly climbed the stairs, following closely behind.

Tristan’s swift, purposeful strides left Noora several steps behind. She saw him halt, waiting for her not far from the staircase’s end. When she reached the top, she stood before him.

“Forgive me, Master Tristan. I was just shocked and curious. If I may ask, why are you already here? From what I heard from Young Master Dax, you are in Singapore and will only arrive here two days later?”

“Oh, did Dax tell you that? Hmmm...I, too, was as shocked as you, Noora. Maybe because I love my wife and son a little too much.” Tristan cheerfully said, smiling.

“S-Sir, you did a great job,” Noora couldn’t help but praise him, giving Tristan two thumbs up. “Young Master Dax will be thrilled to see you. He talked about you a lot yesterday...”

“He did? Thank you for telling me this, Noora. Do you want to wake my son?” Tristan asked.

“Yes, sir. Young Master Dax was supposed to do his martial arts training this morning, but I fell asleep, so I was going to wake him...” Noora lowered her gaze, feeling embarrassed and guilty for the mistake.

“It’s fine. Don’t worry. I’ll tell Dax I insist you let me wake him first.”

“Thank you, sir.”

Tristan walked towards Dax’s room. However, before he entered, he stopped and looked at Noora. “Noora, please don’t wake Bella. I’ll wake her later...”

Noora nodded, understanding Tristan's plan. A smile of approval radiated from her eyes.

'Good luck, Master!' Noora whispered in her heart. She strongly supports Master Tristan in reuniting with Miss Bella after she learns the truth about what happened in the past from Geoffrey.

...

Tristan slowly opened the door. It was dark, and the bright light from outside couldn't come in, blocked by the tightly closed thick curtains.

He walked to the window and drew the curtains aside to let in light. Seeing his son still asleep, the blanket no longer covering his body but at the tips of his feet, made him smile.

Tristan approached the bed and sat on the edge. He noticed his son's pajamas slightly pushed up, revealing his ample stomach and chubby hand resting on it.

Seeing him sleeping like this, he didn't have the heart to wake him up.

However, when Tristan remembered that his son had to practice martial arts, he gently patted Dax's hand while calling his name.

Tristan leaned closer and whispered, "Dax..." When he saw Dax's eyelids move and slowly open, he continued, "Good morning, my son."

Dax's eyes widened upon hearing the familiar voice. He turned to look in its direction and was shocked to see his father.

"Da-Daddy?" he asked in his hoarse voice. He was astonished. How could his father be sitting on his bed now?

"A-Are you really here? Or am I just dreaming?" Dax continued after several blinks to ensure his father was still there. And indeed, his father was still there, smiling at him. He immediately sat up.

Tristan's smile widened. "You're not dreaming, my son," He helped Dax sit up and embraced him.

"Oh my god, Daddy... so you are back!?"

"I flew back immediately after finishing work..." he said.

But Tristan wasn't entirely honest because he was supposed to meet with executives at his company on the second day. However, after hearing that Bella was hospitalized, he canceled the meeting and immediately flew back to Astington.

As soon as Tristan released his embrace, Dax smiled with happiness. He couldn't believe that God had immediately answered his prayer — He had sent his father back to holiday with them.

However, Dax's smile slowly vanished when he remembered something. He asked, "Daddy, did you return because I made you worry...?" His face looked tense.

Tristan smoothed Dax's messy hair. "Of course not, Dax. I came back quickly because I missed you and your mommy."

"Thank you, Daddy..." Dax smiled even wider before he continued, "Can we go fishing today?" his eyes blinked, waiting for the answer.

"Sure. But, now you have to get ready. Aunt Noora is waiting outside. She said you have training with Geoffrey."

Instantly, Dax jumped out of bed. "Oh my, I overslept. Daddy, I'm sorry. Even though I still miss you, I can't talk much with you now. I have to go to practice immediately. Are you okay with that?"

Tristan laughed amusedly when he saw how adorable he was. "Sure, Dax. We can continue our discussion later. Besides, I also need to wake up your mother. I need to talk to her. You know what I mean, right?"

Dax's steps halted just before he was about to enter the bathroom. He turned to his father, who was standing near the bedroom door.

"Daddy, I hope you win back my mommy's heart this time."

When Tristan listened to Dax's words, his heart grew tense. He could only smile at him and say, "I will do my best, son. And please pray for me."

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 183: He Would Tell Her

Tristan went to Bella's room after discussing Dax with Noora for a while.

Today, Tristan, who has been harboring deep feelings for Bella, decides to be honest with her about their status. He felt approaching her with such intentions for a month was enough.

He slowly turned the doorknob of Bella's door. 'It's not locked! Of course, you dummy! Bella won't lock it if Dax sleeps in a separate room,' Tristan said inwardly before stepping inside.

The room was dimly lit, with only a ray of sunlight seeping through the slightly opened curtains.

His heart started pounding as his eyes fixed on the bed. He silently closed the door before approaching the large bed in the center of the room. Bella lay there like a sleeping angel.

Tristan sat on the edge of the bed, his actions frozen by his concern. He didn't dare disturb her, not even to brush the hair from her face. Afraid she would be awake, he wanted to let her sleep a little longer.

Based on her medical report, Tristan understands that she is suffering from chronic fatigue, which is a result of the hard work and stressful situation she is currently experiencing.

Upon his flight landing in this city, Tristan learned that Bella's company, Stellar Entertainment, faced issues with Laura Kiels' fans. He began to suspect that her health had dropped due to her work.

'Bella, if you need my help, please ask me. I would do anything for you...' he whispered.

After feasting his eyes on her beauty, his eyes slowly moved to her smooth white neck and stopped at her chest. He felt his blood boiling and his body heat rising. He quickly averted his gaze, afraid he couldn't resist joining her under the blanket.

'Bella, did you know? Even when you sleep, you successfully torture me like this...' Tristan laughed bitterly in his heart as he stood up from the bed and walked towards the window; he needed to calm his mind and heart.

Tristan stood by the window and watched his son, Dax, train with Geoffrey on the white sand. Dax looked serious, but he smiled and laughed sometimes. He didn't look like he was training in martial arts; he looked more like playing and exercising.

Though Dax had been training for a few weeks, his progress was faster for a toddler his age but slower than kids in junior school. And that is what Geoffrey aimed. He didn't push Dax too hard. Instead, he focused on building the foundations of Dax's power, discipline, fun, and love of the sport.

Tristan stood there watching Dax from the second-floor window for so long that he lost track of time until he heard Bella's voice groaning in pain. Worried, he quickly turned towards the bed, seeing her body move slightly. Without hesitation, he walked over to her to check on her.

Tristan noticed Bella's forehead furrowing as if she was having a bad dream; he slowly sat back down on the edge of the bed, just in case Bella needed him. His eyes fell on her face. Then, he saw her eyes tremble, and her eyelashes slowly opened.

His smile widened.

However, when Bella's hands finally came out of the blanket, and she pushed it away from her body, Tristan's smile suddenly disappeared. The tension was replaced when his gaze began to move down to look at her body, which was only covered by a thin nightgown, so thin that he could even see her hard nipples beneath the cloth.

For a moment, Tristan couldn't blink; he was too shocked by the beautiful, seductive sight he saw now.

"T-Tristan!!" Instantly, Bella's hoarse-shocked voice broke the silence as she pulled the blanket she had just thrown off to cover her entire body; only his eyes were now visible, widened as he looked at Tristan. "Wh-What are you doing in my... my room?" she stammered.

The passion that almost made Tristan lose control suddenly disappeared when he heard Bella say his name in surprise.

He looked into her eyes with an awkward smile. "Good morning, beautiful... how are you today?" His gentle and soft voice caused Bella's heart to start making a loud and strange sound again. Badam! Badam! Badam!

Tristan completely ignored Bella's question. His eyes calmly and gently met her panicked and awkward eyes.

"Are you feeling better now, Bella? Is there anything I can get you? A glass of water, perhaps?" he asked. She didn't answer right away but simply looked at him.

Later,

Bella shook her head and said, "Thanks, Tristan. No need. I'm fine..." She finally managed to utter something.

As she was processing her shock, she suddenly remembered that Tristan had left all his work in another country and rushed to her side when he found out that she was sick and had been admitted to the hospital. How could she possibly ignore such a selfless act of love and care? She knew she couldn't.

Bella sat up slowly from the bed and wrapped the blanket tightly around her body up to her chest. She worried that Tristan might think she was teasing him because her nightgown was thin.

When their eyes met, she suddenly blurted out the countless thoughts dancing in her mind since last night.

“I thought you would only be here in the next few days. Why did you come here so early? What about your work? You should have stayed in Singapore and finished your business trip. Won’t there be any negative effects because you rushed back here?” She asked in worry.

Tristan felt his heart swell, flattered by her question. His mind once more reminds him, ‘Man, this is a sign! Subtle, though. But it’s still a sign! Bella is starting to reciprocate your feelings...’ Hearing his inner voice encouraging him boosted his mood and confidence to win back her heart.

Despite not answering Bella’s questions, Tristan extended his arm, placed his hand on her waist, and gently guided her to sit much closer on his lap.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 184: You Can’t Avoid Him

Their faces were close, and their eyes met on the same level. He noticed her surprise but didn’t detect any signs of rejection, which filled him with joy. He reached out and used his hand to brush away some of her messy hair gently. Once again, Tristan felt his heart swell bigger, and it felt warm when Bella didn’t stop him at all.

He finished straightening her hair, then once more, he gazed into her eyes with a loving smile.

“Bella,” said Tristan. A warm smile slowly spread across his lips before he continued. “I have often told you I am willing to give up everything for you and Dax. My family is the only thing I care about.”

“T-Tristan, but—”

Tristan halted Bella mid-sentence with his finger, gently stroking her red but slightly dry lips.

“I know you must feel guilty, Bella. But, please don’t... You don’t have to feel like that.”

Tristan smiled as he rubbed her warm cheek with his thumb, noticing her shoulder slightly slump.

“Do you know what, Bella? When you were in the hospital, I felt like I had lost you for the second time. I was scared and didn’t care about anything else. I flew back here to

see you and..." Tristan's sentence abruptly ended as he wrapped his arms around her and pulled her close.

Bella was taken aback when Tristan suddenly embraced her, causing her to drop her blanket. However, she did not resist the embrace; instead, she slightly leaned her head on his shoulder.

His smile widened when he felt Bella not pushing him, even voluntarily leaning her head on his shoulder.

"I want to hold you close like this. I want to stay by your side to protect and care for you for the rest of your life. It hurts me to think that you're suffering alone," Tristan whispered near her ear as he tightened his embrace. "I love you so much. Please, give me a chance to prove that I'm sincere about what I said."

Tristan embraced the woman he loved silently, holding onto her tightly; he would never let her go again.

Before long,

He finally released her from his embrace and pulled back slightly, admiring her beautiful face.

But for some reason, Tristan's heart slowly tightened when he realized that Bella hadn't said a word since he hugged her. Even when he kissed her forehead gently, she did not resist.

He should be happy. But her silence made him worried.

Tristan glanced over to see her small, delicate hands resting on her lap. He gently took her hand and held it tightly. He slowly raised his gaze to meet hers. Her eyes were slightly red, and the light was fading, making his heart tense.

Why did she look sad?

"Bella, please say something," Tristan said softly.

Tristan was scared. He would have preferred if Bella had immediately stopped talking or scolded him rather than being treated silently like this.

...

As Bella heard his confession, her heart began to race once again. She blinked a few times, unable to maintain eye contact with him. Her gaze shifted to their linked hands, and her heart began to beat even faster.

Bella felt an intense sensation in her chest that she hadn't experienced in a long time. The thunderous beating of her heart was more intense than the fluttering she had felt every time she interacted with Tristan over the past few weeks.

'Has my heart melted for him again!?' Bella asked herself. She was unsure how to react to his sweet sincerity.

"Bella, are you mad at me?" Tristan impatiently asked Bella, curious to know her reaction.

Upon hearing Tristan's voice again, Bella felt even more pressure from the feelings she had attempted to suppress. However, suddenly, a small voice from within her heart spoke up, saying, 'You can't avoid your feelings any longer, Bella! It's time to be honest with yourself and with him.'

Bella took a deep breath. Just before she wanted to express her feelings and what was on her mind to Tristan, all the sentences stopped on the tip of her tongue when she realized something.

Instantly, she feels her face hot again.

Why am I in this position? Sitting on his lap in such thin clothes?

Bella became even more embarrassed when she clearly saw her own curves.

'Did you secretly tell him you wanted him too? Is that why you're wearing such a seductive evening gown?' She can't help but vent her frustration.

"Tristan," Bella's voice was so low as she turned her gaze to him. "Let me change clothes first before we talk."

Tristan was happy when he heard Bella finally speak. When he saw her face blush, his heart raced even more.

"Okay. I will carry you to the bathroom."

Tristan swiftly wrapped his strong arms around Bella's waist and lifted her in a princess-style carry.

"Please, put me down, Tristan. I can walk alone." She protests.

"It's fine, Bella," he smiled.

Bella had no choice but to embrace Tristan's neck and hide her face in his chest. His fresh, masculine scent filled her nose and fogged her mind. She tried to calm her heart but didn't dare move or say anything because, at this moment, the rumbling in her chest grew louder.

Not long after, Tristan stopped in front of the bathroom and slowly put Bella down.

"Do you need something!?" Tristan asked. "I could help you..."

"Please have a seat on the couch and wait for me while I change," Bella said as she hurried into the bathroom.

"Don't rush, dear..." Tristan replied with a beaming smile as he strolled towards the sofa, feeling elated.

...

Bella closed the door behind her and took a deep breath while placing her hand on her chest, hoping to calm her racing heart.

Soon enough, she felt much better, and a faint smile appeared on her lips. She walked towards the wash basin to wash her face, but as soon as she saw her reflection in the mirror, she felt her knees weaken.

"Wh-who are you? Why do you look so weird!?"

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 185: What Makes You Reluctant?

"Wh-who are you? Why do you look so weird!?"

Bella could not recognize the reflection of her face in the mirror in front of her. The person in the mirror's hair looked untidy and messy, while her cheeks were rosy and red as if she were wearing a heavy blusher.

She shook her head and turned on the tap, splashing her still-hot face with cold water.

After finishing her cleaning routine, Bella quickly walked to her walk-in closet to change clothes.

...

Later,

Bella paused in front of the mirror to check her appearance. She smiled, pleased with her choice of dress. The knee-length dark blue dress makes her skin look brighter.

However, upon seeing her hair, she could only shake her head and scold herself.

"I can't believe it, Bella! Why are you exposing your long neck like that? Are you trying to make him turn on?" She reached up to undo her bun but then hesitated. "I wonder how he'll respond to this!" A mischievous grin played on her lips as she imagined Tristan's surprise.

Bella immediately left the walk-in closet and joined Tristan on the couch. However, she did not see him there; he stood by the window with his back facing her.

She suddenly stopped in her tracks when she realized that he had taken off his coat and was now only wearing a black shirt. He had rolled up his sleeves to his elbows, revealing the well-defined muscles in his arms. His hands were tucked inside the pockets of his khaki pants.

As she looked at his broad shoulders, her heart skipped a beat. She took a deep breath and silently approached him. She was curious to know what had captured his attention so much that he hadn't even noticed her by his side.

Upon following his line of sight, Bella's smile gradually widened as she saw Dax playing on white sand with Noora and Geoffrey, building a sand castle with pure joy beaming on his face.

"I've never seen him this happy," Bella spoke softly, surprising Tristan.

Tristan looked at her and shuddered as he saw she styled her hair to expose her smooth neck.

"Oh, sorry, I didn't realize you were done dressing..." he said, his throat suddenly dry as his mind tortured him with sultry thoughts.

"Hmmm..."

Bella answers him without shifting her gaze from Dax. "Gosh! Dax is such a hardworking little baby. He's already finished his martial arts training this hour," she said faintly.

Tristan knew Bella was feeling sad again as she thought about their son being exhausted from physical training.

He tried to distract Bella. He placed his hand on her shoulder and turned her body towards the couch. He jokingly said, "Okay, ma'am... let's sit down and chat."

Bella did not refuse. She smiled faintly at his joke and followed him to the seating area. They sat down on a two-seater sofa, facing each other.

"I still need to hear your answer, Bella," Tristan said softly.

As Bella looked into his beamed blue eyes, she felt her nerves getting the best of her. She wanted to express that the icy wall guarding her heart had finally melted away, but she found herself unable to move her lips to speak.

Annoyed at losing her words, Bella cupped her hands on her thighs and turned away from him.

Tristan could sense the anxiety and doubt in Bella's eyes, and he couldn't stop himself from asking again. "Bella, can you please tell me what's making you hesitate to accept me back? Don't you believe my feelings for you?" His voice sounded despair.

Hearing his words, she immediately looked back at him while shaking her head.

Tristan furrowed his brow as he noticed her reaction. After a moment, he asked, "Are you still worried about my parents interfering with our relationship?"

Bella shook her head again. That wasn't what he was worried about. Tristan and Grandpa Lewis promised they would protect her and Dax if she returned to Tristan, and she would try to believe them.

Tristan's brows furrowed even more.

"Please tell me where I am lacking so I know what I should do to make myself better for you. Or, at least, can you please share your worries with me, Bella? I will listen to you."

Bella opened her mouth several times, but no words came out, and she didn't know why. Feeling frustrated and confused about how to begin, her hands clenched into tight fists, annoyed with herself. She lowered her gaze, looking at her hands while secretly taking a deep breath.

However, when she saw Tristan's hand holding hers, Bella was taken aback. She looked up at him with a frown. But as soon as she saw his calm and gentle smile, her confusion faded, and she could think more clearly.

"Share your worries with me, Bella... Let's untangle your worries and solve them together. Would you like to do that with me?"

"Tristan," she finally spoke after a few seconds of silence. "When we last spoke about what happened between us five years ago, I promised to bury the memories of you and my love for you deep in the deepest part of my heart. However, lately, as layer by layer of what happened in the past has been exposed, and with your sincere approach towards me, the wall I built around my heart in the past has started to crack..."

Bella paused when she felt Tristan's grip tighten but continued when she saw his curious gaze.

"Every day, I allowed you to prove your words and actions to me and Dax. And you know what, Tristan? You succeeded in flattering me..." She smiles bitterly, remembering how this man shattered her walls with his sweet, gentle actions.

She continued, "No matter how much I wanted to deny my feelings for you, I couldn't. My heart couldn't ignore you, Tristan..."

Tristan's happy smile widened, clearly visible in his eyes, as he couldn't contain his joy upon hearing Bella's words.

"However, there's something that makes me hesitant to open up to you again, Tristan," Bella said, her heart racing as she watched his smile fade and his face grow tense with fear.

"W-Why? What makes you reluctant?"

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 186: We Are Still Legally Married, Bella!

"W-Why? What makes you reluctant?"

Bella looked Tristan in the eye and said, "Tristan, I've promised someone..." Her voice trailed off when she saw his worried gaze.

She can't bring herself to tell him that she promised Sean Spencer a chance—if Sean's parents one day accept their relationship, she'll give him a chance, try to love him, and marry him. This made her reluctant to decide, as she had to meet Sean to talk heart-to-heart about this matter.

If she accepted Tristan without meeting Sean, it would betray her promise to him. The thought of hurting Sean or breaking the trust they had built was unbearable.

Tristan felt his heart slowly ache as he guessed what was bothering Bella at the moment. He didn't want to put any pressure on her or put her in the corner, so he promised to wait until she felt ready to tell him.

However, after five silent and eerie minutes, Bella still said nothing. She only looked at their intertwined hands. Despite the eerie feeling, Tristan feels grateful because even though Bella didn't say anything, at least she didn't pull her hand away. She let him gently caress her hand.

A smile slowly appeared on his lips before he casually asked, "Bella. I'm sorry if I say this.....Are you hesitant to accept me again because of Sean Spencer?"

Bella was stunned to hear that; she immediately looked up to meet his gaze.

Tristan saw Bella not saying anything but only looking at him with her confused-looking eyes.

He continued, "I'll take your silence as you inwardly say yes. So, it's really because of Sean Spencer, huh..."

A faint smile slowly appeared on the corners of his lips before he calmly said, "I'm sure you know my good relationship with Sean's parents, right?"

She slightly nods.

"Are you and Sean a couple now? I mean—" Tristan couldn't finish his words. His heart ached like it had been stabbed by a hundred nails when he imagined Sean having a romantic relationship with his wife. But Tristan pushed himself to look as calm and as composed as possible.

Tristan had always refused to believe that Sean and Bella were in a serious relationship. So, he never wanted to bring up this topic when they had time to chat, probably because he also feared hearing answers he didn't want to hear. But now, he pulled himself together and dared to ask her.

"No. We are not a couple...well, not yet!"

Hearing Bella's firm answer and how quickly she denied it shocked him.

Did he hear it wrong?

"Are you saying he is not your boyfriend? At least not yet?" he asked to ensure he had heard it correctly.

She nodded slowly.

"He's not my boyfriend, but I've had a close relationship with Sean since I was a teenager. And in the last two years, we've gotten even closer..." Bella began to explain to Tristan how Sean helped her and Dax a lot when they were still living in Sweden.

Bella also told him that Sean always confessed his feelings to her. Still, she always rejected him because she wanted to focus on raising Dax and didn't plan on starting a new relationship.

Tristan feels his heart tighten, nervous to hear her story. But he tries hard not to ask her any further.

“But when I arrived on my first day in the country, Sean expressed his feelings again...” Bella paused to take a deep breath before continuing.

“That day, I still firmly rejected him and told him my biggest reason why I couldn’t be with him—his family. I know who his family is. However, Sean still tried to convince me; he promised me blessings from his parents.” A wry smile slowly appeared on her face, remembering that day — she felt bad about giving him hope.

“Well, at that time, I knew his parents would never accept me, but I still gave him hope... If his parents accept me and Dax without hesitation, I will consider his proposal to marry me,” Bella said softly. She felt her shoulders lighten after she expressed what was bothering her mind.

Tristan slowly released his grip on her hand, leaving Bella frowning.

Bella slowly lowered her gaze, looking at her hands. Her mind was confused as to why he suddenly withdrew his hand. Was he angry after hearing about her relationship with Sean?

She clenched her hands in worry; when she was about to ask him, she suddenly felt his warm hand caressing her cheek.

This!?

Bella immediately looked up to see him; However, she was shocked when she realized that Tristan’s face was so close to her. She couldn’t help but blink when their eyes met. Before she could say anything, Tristan asked, “Do you love him?”

“NO. I haven’t fallen in love with him, not yet... But if one day his parents approve of us, Maybe I can learn how to love—”

Tristan’s index finger landed on her lips, silencing her.

“Bella, there is no future for you and Sean Spencer. Because his parents would never approve of him marrying you...” A confident smile framed his handsome face, confusing Bella.

“Why are you so sure about that? Even Sean convinced me that his parents would accept me,” Bella narrowed her eyes on him before continuing. “Sean was only unlucky because he had to fly to another country that night and didn’t have time to meet his parents. So...” She shrugs.

“Do you want to know why I am so confident in saying that?” Tristan now held both her hands again. He ensured Bella looked into his eyes before continuing, “Because you

are still my wife, Bella. We are still legally married. If Sean came to his parents and said he wanted to marry my wife, his parents might break his legs.”

Bella gasped in shock.

She no longer heard Tristan’s last words because his words, “We are still legally married.” Shocked her.

What does it mean?

Why did Tristan suddenly admit we were still married!?

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 187: Please Explain To Me, Tristan!

Bella gasped in shock. She no longer heard Tristan’s last words because his words, “We are still legally married...” shocked her.

What does it mean? Why did Tristan suddenly admit we were still married!?

“So about your promise to Sean, I will discuss it with him. You don’t need to worry about him. He would understand and support us if he knew about our status—”

“Wait, wait, Tristan! Please stop...” Bella stopped him from speaking further as she needed to clarify something with him. She was worried that she had misheard him.

“Yes, dear...” Tristan’s gentle tone and squeeze of their entangled hands sent a shiver down her spine. She silently swallowed and dared to continue looking into her eyes before expressing her confusion.

“You said earlier... We are still legally married. How is that possible!?”

Bella still couldn’t believe what she was hearing. How could they get married when she had already signed the papers? She clearly remembered his shameless lawyer forcing her to sign.

“Yes, we are still husband and wife... Bella, you are still my wife because I never filed our divorce papers with the court,” said Tristan calmly. However, Bella was stunned to hear his words.

Instantly, countless questions danced in her mind, ‘Never submit to the court!? Why did he do that? I remember he sent his lawyer to force me to sign the letter. Why? Why...?’

So many questions rang in Bella’s mind, immediately giving her a headache. She narrowed her eyes at Tristan before shouting his name in a cold, icy tone.

“Tristan Sinclair...”

“Yes, dear?”

When Bella got his attention, she didn’t utter anything. Instead, she pulled her hand from him and slapped his shoulder to vent her anger.

How dare he do that? Force her to sign but not submit to the court? Did he try to prank her?

“Are you kidding me, right!? How could you force me to sign that damn paper and never submit it to the court?”

Bella’s eyes burned with anger as she stared at him. However, when she saw his gentle smile slowly bloom from his lips and his hand held hers, she gritted her teeth, trying to maintain her annoyance.

“I’m sorry, Bella... I know apologizing is not acceptable. That’s why you can slap or punch me again. I don’t mind, darling.”

Bella was puzzled hearing his words. However, when Tristan led her hand to hit his chest, she gasped in surprise. She was utterly speechless by his random action.

“I deserve your fist, Bella,” Tristan said as he continued to let her tiny fist hit his chest.

Bella, “....”

How shameless!

“What are you doing, Tristan?” Bella snapped, glaring at him as she tried to pull away her hand. But Tristan didn’t give her a chance and continued his actions.

“It’s fine. I don’t mind. I deserved to be hit. I’m such a stupid husband...”

After her hand punched his sturdy chest several times, Bella felt even more sorry. Her annoyance with him slowly faded, replaced by sadness when her fist hit his chest. For some reason, she felt a heartache when she did that.

Unable to look into his eyes, Bella lowered her gaze and stared at his chest. In a trembling voice, she said, “Tristan, please stop... I don’t want to hit you. I did that because I was just annoyed you didn’t tell me so—”

Bella couldn’t finish her words because she threw herself into his chest to stop him from using her hand to blame himself.

Tristan was surprised when he felt her softness in his chest. For a moment, he froze, but then, a spring-like smile slowly graced his face as he crossed his arms around her. He gently stroked her back, feeling content.

After a long pause, finally, Bella said something.

"I hate you, Tristan Sinclair... I'm really mad at you," she said while still hiding her face in his chest. "But I feel like my heart hurts every time my hand punches you. I'm confused. Why do I feel like that?" She felt puzzled with herself at the moment.

The light in Tristan's eyes shone as he said, "That's because you still love me, Bella." He tightened his embrace and felt his heart swell from the happiness.

"Thank you for giving me a chance despite hurting you in the past..." his voice slowly faded as he felt her tiny hands push him away.

Bella could see Tristan's face more clearly. She said, "Tristan, I want to hear everything. I want to hear why you didn't submit the papers in court...everything..."

Bella had heard his confession, as well as about their misunderstandings and his delay in realizing how much he loved her. But now, she just wanted Tristan to explain everything to her again. She needed a complete explanation.

...

After a few minutes, Bella found herself in his arms again while listening to him finish his words. Hearing his explanation entirely made her no longer angry with him; instead, she felt a weird feeling that now lingered in her heart.

After five years, she thought they were divorced, and suddenly, now finding out they were still married, it felt absurd.

However, after a while, something crossed Bella's mind. She looked slightly to meet his gaze before asking, "Tristan, why didn't you tell me sooner about this?"

Tristan loosened his embrace upon hearing her question. After he had her sit properly again and look into her eyes, he gently placed his hand on her shoulder before answering.

"I don't want to force you to accept me. That's why, during our first meeting, I didn't tell you the truth about our marital status. I didn't even tell you in the following days until now because I don't want to use it as my excuse to win back your heart..."

His seriousness and sincerity struck Bella. She held back and waited for him to finish his words.

Tristan's expression became even brighter as he said, "I want to approach you naturally, Bella. I don't want to make any mistakes—"

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 188: Live Under The Same Roof?

"I am not the same person who ignored you for years, even though you were his wife. Because now, I'm the one who's fallen in love with you. So, Arabella Donovan, allow me to chase you back into my arms. Chase you back so you would love me, and I could love you more..."

Bella couldn't hide how much his words touched her. Her spring-like smile slowly framed her happy face.

She opened her mouth to say something, but when she saw Tristan's face getting closer, she slowly closed her eyes as she imagined him kissing her.

Her heart starts to make a strange sound again. Badam! Badam! Badam!

She starts to remember this feeling. This is the same feeling when she was madly in love with him.

Bella didn't know how to react now. She had never pictured their status had always been as husband and wife. Tristan had never actually completed his intention to divorce her.

Since their separation, he has been in love with her for the last five years. Bella's mind finds it hard to believe. But even so, her heart says otherwise, and it had betrayed her mind. She felt like accepting him again—no, but she was willing to stand beside him again and become his legal wife.

After a few seconds passed, Bella frowned.

'Why didn't he kiss me? Did I imagine it wrong?' Bella wondered and slowly opened her eyes, trying to peek out.

When Bella saw his face only an inch, she held her breath, feeling nervous. Just before their lips touched, the sound of the door opening caught their attention.

"Ups...sorry..." Dax' cute voice echoes in the room. "Dad, mom... I'm sorry..." Dax stopped when he saw his parents were about to kiss.

They looked at him in surprise.

Dax felt sorry, especially for his father, and worried that because of him, his father would fail again to win his mother's heart.

"Y-Yes... baby?"

"What happened?"

Tristan and Bella awkwardly respond to their son while they try to sit properly as if nothing happened.

"Sorry if I showed up and interrupted Daddy and Mommy from kissing. But I just want to tell you, Dad and Mom, breakfast is ready. And Gramps and Grandpa are waiting in the dining room. Ugh, I just wanted to say that. Ok... I will go down now..." Dax turned around and left.

"Dax, don't go. Come here first..." Bella immediately called him before he closed the door.

"Mommy, are you serious? I could join you..." he asks while glancing at his father. He is worried that if he comes in, it will disturb them.

Dax stands near the door, reluctant to enter.

Tristan smiles, looking at his son, who seems to worry about him. He can't help but stand from his seat and approach him. He bends slightly down to pick him up. After closing the bedroom door, he joins Bella on the sofa.

When Dax's worried gaze meets his, he whispers, "It's fine, son. There's something we need to tell you..." Tristan sat beside Bella and let Dax sit in his lap.

Tristan glances at Bella, and when he sees her smile at Dax while playfully teasing their son, pinching his chubby cheek, he feels even more in love with her.

"Have you finished practicing today?" Bella asked while trying to fix his messy hair. Seeing his clean, fair skin after bathing made her want to hug him. But she refrained because her son didn't like it if she did that before someone else; her little Dax was always shy.

"Yes. I was about to head to the first floor when Aunt Noora asked me to tell Mom and Dad to have breakfast."

"Oh, you're right. It's already eight o'clock..." Bella was stunned. After talking to Tristan, she lost track of time; she even forgot her hunger. Geez!

Just before Bella wanted to stand up and ask them to the dining room, Dax suddenly asked a question.

“Dad, did my mom accept you? So, are we going to live in the same house!?” Dax looked at his parents in return, curiously waiting for them to answer his question.

Tristan didn’t answer right away. He looked at Bella with his worried gaze. He was concerned about answering Dax because they hadn’t talked about it yet.

Deep in his heart, Tristan wanted Bella to move in with him immediately, but he wouldn’t force her to do that. He can be patient, wait, and follow her decision.

What was essential to Tristan right now was Bella’s feelings for him. After a heart-to-heart conversation, he could feel that Bella had opened her heart to him again. This is what he hoped for. However, for some reason, he still worried that this was just his dream, his imagination.

Bella could guess what Tristan was thinking now. She couldn’t help but smile at him before she looked at their son.

“Dax, Mom, and Dad will talk about it later,” she answered him with a smile. But when the light in her son’s eyes slowly faded, as if he looked disappointed, hearing her answer was enough to worry her.

Confused, Bella looked back at Tristan, asking him to answer Dax. She was worried that if she said yes — they’d move to live with him — Tristan would tell Dax otherwise.

“Yes, Dax... We’ll live in the same house,” Tristan answered firmly, his eyes still on Bella. When he saw her shock, he squeezed her hand gently with a gentle smile framing his handsome face.

Bella didn’t say anything when she heard Tristan’s words. Her heartbeat sped up at this moment.

She had mixed feelings now; she was happy but also worried. After five years, she would start a new life with him. Even though Tristan is her husband by law, she feels today is the first time they have become husband and wife and have started living under the same roof. How nervous she is now.

It’s hard for her to describe her feelings now, but she feels like someone has just thrown her into cloud nine.

“Really!?” Dax shouted excitedly as he turned his gaze towards Bella. “Mom, is that true? We’re going to move to Dad’s house?”

“Yes...”

Chapter 189: Everyone Knows

Bella couldn't help but feel her cheeks heat up when she saw Lewis and Isaac's reactions—seemingly congratulating her through their happy smiles—as she entered the room while holding hands with Tristan.

She looked up to Tristan and tried to pull her hand from his, but he refused to let go. His grip was firm as if he was determined to announce to everyone in the room that they were back together.

Bella silently took a deep breath while turning her gaze away from Tristan, slightly annoyed. However, when her eyes fell on Noora, Geoffrey, and Nick, huddled in the corner with expressions mirroring those of Lewis and Isaac, Bella's inner turmoil intensified. She couldn't help but direct her frustration towards Tristan.

Even though she had confessed her feelings to him, could he keep a low profile for a moment?

Now, everyone looked at them strangely, walking while holding hands. Gosh!

"Bella, Tristan, hurry up and have breakfast. It'll be launched soon if you don't eat now..." said Isaac, trying to break the tension when he saw Bella looking very tense and embarrassed.

They both nodded in response to Isaac.

When Bella saw Tristan talking to Dax, she took the opportunity to pull her hand from his. She walked faster to her seat and thanked Noora for helping her prepare her warm tea.

Today, Bella avoided coffee because she was worried about her health.

Later,

Bella tried to ask Dax to sit between her and Tristan, but Tristan didn't allow that. He leaned closer and whispered, "Dax already had his breakfast..."

She was speechless and sipped her tea to calm her nervousness. But a few seconds later, Bella felt even more nervous when she heard her Grandpa's words.

"I'm surprised to see you here, Tristan. I thought you would join us the next day. Why are you back early?" Isaac asked while looking at Tristan.

When he asked Noora to wake Bella this morning, Isaac Donovan was shocked to know Tristan was upstairs with Bella.

Isaac didn't expect to meet Tristan this early because Tristan hadn't mentioned anything about his sudden return in their Group chat, Cupid Alliance.

Even though he was curious about Tristan's sudden return, Isaac asked Noora not to disturb them until nine o'clock — to let Tristan talk to Bella. He knows his grandson-in-law aims to pursue Bella again.

Tristan turned to see Isaac.

"Grandpa... My important agenda in Singapore is finished. And because the rest of the agenda can be done online, I have no reason to stay there too long. Besides, I really miss my wife and son..." he explained, then continued eating again.

However, Tristan's breakfast was interrupted again when Lewis Sinclair heard his answer.

Lewis put his coffee cup on the table and narrowed his eyes at Tristan.

'Why did Tristan call Bella his wife? Have they both remarried?' Lewis wondered. He really wanted them to get back together. Still, Tristan has never reported on his progress in winning Bella's heart. Not once. He feels confused.

Unable to contain his curiosity, Lewis asked, "Tristan, have you and Bella remarried? Why didn't you tell us?"

Bella felt tense; she slowly turned her gaze to Tristan. When she saw his smile, her heart pounded again.

"Grandpa, Bella is my legal wife. I have never filed divorce papers with the court," Tristan continued to tell Lewis everything, making Lewis gasp in shock.

A minute passed after Tristan explained his relationship with Bella. However, Lewis still couldn't digest all the information he was hearing. He quietly sat in his chair, with his eyes still looking at Tristan and Bella alternately. He was thinking about something.

Another few minutes passed, and Lewis glanced at Isaac. He was surprised to see his best friend seemed calm. There's no trace of shock in him; instead, he looked relaxed, chatting playfully with Dax.

"Isaac, did you know anything about this?" Lewis' eyes narrowed at Isaac.

"Hmm, we all know something..." Isaac chuckled. "If I'm not mistaken, you and Bella are the only ones who didn't know about this. Even our little Dax knows..."

"What? Dax knows? He's a toddler, and he already knows about it!?" Lewis was rendered speechless.

Lewis wasn't the only one surprised. Bella, who had just finished breakfast, was shocked to find out that her son already knew. Dax had never said anything about it to her, and he never said anything that could raise her suspicions. The boy cleverly remained silent about it all this time.

Gosh!

Bella turned her gaze to her Grandpa and then Dax. She saw the two of them returning her gaze with a smile. Then she looked at Noora, who smiled at her with the same expression.

'Oh my, even Noora knows about this?' Bella couldn't believe that even her trusted nanny kept this a secret from her.

She shook her head slowly, then finished her tea to calm her mind, and tried not to get involved when Lewis started to scold Tristan.

However, hearing Lewis's anger now, Bella felt amused because Lewis's annoyance was the same feeling she had when she found out about her marital status with Tristan.

...

After breakfast, Bella could finally escape Isaac and Lewis's interrogation about her future romance. She returned to her room to make a phone call with Leo while the others still chatted in the living room.

She needed to inform Leo about her sudden change of plans. Today, she would not follow the schedule to visit Celebes Energy. Instead, she would meet them at this beach house.

On the second ring, the phone was immediately picked up. She could hear Leo's cheerful voice greeting her.

"Good morning, Boss..."

"Hi, morning, Leo..."

"How are you today? Has your fever completely gone?" Leo asked in concern.

"Much better," Bella answered. She felt relieved because she no longer felt her fever when she woke this morning, and her headache was gone. And most importantly, her body also felt lighter.

"It's good to hear that, boss. OK, I will pick you up around eleven. We can have lunch at a local restaurant before heading to Celebes Energy."

Bella immediately asked Leo to cancel their initial schedule.

"Huh!? I thought you were already healthy. Why are you canceling our plan?" Leo asked confusedly.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 190: Sharing Room With Tristan?

Today, they were supposed to have their last meeting with Celebes Energy's key person. After that, they would have online meetings with Stellar Entertainment to discuss the trending news about Laura Kiel's army, who attacked them through cyberbullying.

"I do want to go there, but Tristan returned from Singapore. He knows about my health, so I don't have a choice but to stay home." Bella took a deep breath.

"Tsk! Tsk! Boss Tristan is so cool..." Leo couldn't hold back his admiration, impressed by Tristan's actions. Then he continued, "But how could Tristan know about your health?" Leo was curious to know.

"I can't tell you how. But he is here and only allows me to work from home. He might follow us if I insist on going to Celebes Energy."

"Come on, boss," Leo chuckled. "He is not your husband. Why do you listen to him?"

Bella, "..."

"Alright, you come to this beach house after lunch!"

Beep!

Bella ended the call without giving Leo a chance to speak.

...

When Bella left her bedroom to look for Dax, she was surprised to see Geoffrey and Noora emerging from the stairs with two large black suitcases in their hands. They both walked towards her room.

"What's this?" Bella asked, confused. She didn't remember having these two suitcases.

“Yong Madam, this is Mr. Tristan’s suitcase. We will unpack his clothes in the master bedroom,” Geoffrey explained as he opened the door to her room and motioned for Noora to enter the room first.

Bella, “....”

She knew they were still husband and wife, at least since today. But she had forgotten entirely that they would share the same room.

“Young Madam, you look slightly pale... Are you alright?” Suddenly, Geoffrey’s words snapped Bella. She immediately shook her head to answer him.

“I’m fine.”

Geoffrey still doubted. He clearly saw the anxiety in her expression, as if something was bothering her.

“Mam, is there anything I can help you with?” he asked again.

“I’m fine, Geoffrey. You can continue what you’re doing now.” She gave him a reassuring smile and continued walking towards the stairs. However, her mind was still busy imagining that she would share a room with Tristan.

Why did she forget this critical matter?

Sigh!

Bella silently took a deep breath while descending the stairs.

‘I think you need to remind Tristan, Bella! Even though you have opened your heart to him again, you need time to adjust to living as husband and wife with him. That’s right!’ She tries to remind herself.

After several years of living alone, the thought of sleeping with Tristan seemed strange. Memories of their past relationship came back to mind, sending shivers down her spine.

Bella shook her head, trying to dismiss all her worry about it.

There was no one in sight when Bella arrived in the living room.

‘Weren’t they chatting here after eating earlier?’ She thought as she walked to look in another room.

But before she left the living room, Nick, her grandfather's butler, appeared. Bella's steps stopped.

"Where are Dax and the others?" She asked Nick.

"The elders are now in the library. While the young Master walked outside with his father."

Bella was surprised to hear that. She looked towards the backyard.

Since arriving at this beach house, she hasn't had the chance to walk to the beach; she only sees the backyard garden and the beach through her window. And now, knowing that Dax and Tristan were there, she immediately felt wanted to follow them.

"Do you need anything, Young Miss!?" Nick's question suddenly made Bella return her gaze to him.

She shook her head quickly and asked Nick to continue his work.

After seeing Nick leave the room, Bella walked towards the back door that connected the living room to the backyard.

The gentle, cool air immediately greeted her when she left the house. She felt in a good mood and instantly forgot about her worry about sharing a room with Tristan from now on.

She looked at the clear blue sky, pinching her eyes from the bright sun.

Even though the sun is shining, the air is delightful for sunbathing. An idea appears in her mind: tomorrow, she is supposed to be free from work, and she will enjoy this lovely weather and bask under the sun.

Bella passed the infinity pool and walked along the path toward the beach.

She stood under a tree when she reached the beach, avoiding the sun. Her eyes were busy looking for Tristan and Dax, but she didn't see them.

As far as her eyes could see, she didn't see anyone walking on the white sandy beach.

"It seems I heard wrongly!?" She said, confused by Nick's information.

Bella decides to return to the house. However, when she is about to walk, she sees Tristan and Dax getting out of the yacht, parked on the dock a few tens of meters from where she was.

A smile slowly appeared on her face. Without her knowing, her feet took a step towards them.

“Mommy...” Dax shouted happily as soon as he saw his mother. He ran towards her. “Mom... Earlier, Dad explained the yacht to me. And we plan to sail this afternoon.”

Bella could only smile, hearing how enthusiastic Dax was talking about the yacht. As usual, his eyes beamed whenever he talks about something he likes.

“Join us, Bella. It would be fun...” Tristan smiles lovingly. He tries to convince Bella to follow them. He found out from Dax that Bella had never been rested. She is busy with work.

Bella looked up to see him in the eyes. Just before she wanted to say something, Dax held her hand and said, “Yes, Mommy... Come with us...” He pleaded.

“I’m sorry, baby. I do want to go with you but I can’t. Uncle Leo will come this afternoon... Mom has a meeting with him.” She feels sad about rejecting her son but can’t cancel this meeting again.

“Ah...” Dax softly responds.

Looking at her son’s sadness, she immediately said, “But starting tomorrow, Mommy will be free from work. So, we can have fun all day long.”

Dax and Tristan’s smile grew wider.

“Alright, We will arrange our trip tomorrow too...” Tristan said excitedly.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 191: Your Parents Know!

The three immediately entered the house. Dax went back to his room to take a nap. Meanwhile, Bella and Tristan, who were just about to go upstairs to rest, were stopped by Alan, Lewis Sinclair’s butler.

“What’s wrong, Alan?” Tristan asked, sounding annoyed. He wanted to be alone with Bella, but Alan disturbed them.

“Young Master, Old Master called you. He said there was something important he needed to discuss with you,” Alan explained.

Tristan’s forehead furrowed as he looked at Alan. “Please tell Grandpa I’m a little busy right now. I have something to do. We’ll talk after lunch,” he refused, even though he could see Alan’s worried expression. But he still ignored it because there was something important he needed to discuss with Bella.

‘Busy! What are you busy with?’ Standing next to Tristan, Bella could only smile silently when she heard Tristan’s words.

They had a lot of free time before lunchtime, and now Bella didn’t even know what she wanted to do because she suddenly changed her schedule—she didn’t go to her office. Taking a short nap looks like it would become her priority now.

“Sorry, sir. But, this is very important...” Alan paused as he glanced at Bella; he felt reluctant to tell Tristan about this matter, especially when Bella was around.

Looking at Alan, who seemed reluctant, Tristan became suspicious about something and asked, “What is it?”

Alan can’t help but inform him, “It’s about your parents.”

Instantly, Tristan and Bella stiffened hearing that. For a moment, they exchanged glances as if communicating with each other through their gaze.

Tristan started to feel afraid when he saw Bella’s worried gaze. He decided not to prolong this matter any longer. He needed to take care of his parents soon.

Later,

Tristan held Bella’s shoulder gently before saying, “Bella, can you go up first? I have to meet Grandpa...”

“Mhm, sure... go talk with Grandpa. This must be important...” She smiled faintly, trying to tell him that she was okay.

Even though he was reluctant, Tristan finally nodded, “I’ll go upstairs immediately. You take a rest first. Please don’t work...” He knew Bella liked to work, but right now, he just wanted her to rest and recover her condition quickly.

Bella could only respond with a smile, hearing his words. She wasn’t used to getting that much attention from other people, especially Tristan.

...

Even though he was reluctant, Tristan followed Alan to his grandfather’s room.

When they entered, Tristan saw his grandfather sitting in a chair at the end of the room, engrossed in the view outside.

“Sir, please...” Alan gestured to Tristan to continue to enter the room.

“Grandpa,” Tristan greeted his grandfather, who was unaware of his presence.

“Ah, Tristan. You’ve come. Sit, sit...” Lewis glanced at Tristan. Then he asked Alan to leave the two of them. However, after Alan left, Lewis didn’t immediately say anything. He just stared at Tristan with his firm expression, confusing Tristan.

Tristan grew impatient because his grandpa didn’t utter anything. He ran his finger through his hair before saying, “Grandpa, my wife is waiting upstairs. We can talk tonight if you still don’t want to talk...” he suggested.

He would go upstairs and accompany Bella rather than be here watching his grandfather stare at him as if he wanted to slap him with his gaze.

“Brat, what would you do now? Your parents know I’m here.”

Tristan was surprised to hear that. However, he didn’t care because his parents didn’t know he also came to this place. It would be troublesome if they found out because his father knew about his business trip to Singapore — his father would be suspicious about something.

“So?”

“Your father also heard that you came back suddenly from Singapore, and now they plan to fly here. Because they were worried that something terrible had happened to me when they knew you flew in a rush to this place...” Lewis explained.

“WHAT! Why are they coming here?” Tristan sounded annoyed hearing about that.

This is why Tristan is reluctant to use this family villa. His parents would find out if they investigated his reasons for coming here. But because he didn’t have time to buy new property near this place, he had no choice but to use this beach house.

Before they flew here, he could only warn all the workers not to tell anyone about Bella and Dax, who had also come to this place.

“That’s why I called you,” Lewis said, taking a deep breath before continuing, “You were too rash to fly back here. Now, they are thinking I’m sick!”

Tristan was speechless.

“Have they talked to you?” Tristan asked.

“Yes. I told them that I called you to come to this place. I also asked them not to come,” Lewis stopped while taking a deep breath. He turned his gaze out the window before continuing his sentence. “However, you know your mother, right?”

Tristan could only nod slowly. He knew his mother would still send someone to check on his grandpa.

They were silent for a moment as if busy thinking about something.

Not long after, Tristan was the first to break the silence.

“Grandpa, I’m not worried about my mother and father. But I’m worried about Bella. She will still be traumatized if she has to meet them now. I don’t want my relationship with her, which is starting to get better, to get worse again...” Tristan expressed his concern.

“I know. That’s why I need to hear your plans for dealing with them. Especially your mother?” Lewis curiously gazed at Tristan.

However, when Lewis Sinclair saw Tristan keep silent, he continued, “Brat, don’t tell me you don’t have a plan!? Seriously!?”

Tristan chuckled.

“Oh, come on, Grandpa. Of course, I have my own plan. I’ll meet my father and mother when we return to the capital. I will tell them about my relationship with Bella and Dax.”

He can’t let his parents know about Bella and Dax from other people. He needs to meet with them as soon as possible and set boundaries.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 192: I will Take Care Of Them

Tristan can’t let his parents know about Bella and Dax from other people. No one knows more clearly and in detail than himself. If he is the first to tell them, he could tell it in a way he knows they would not overreact.

Moreover, if he’s the one to tell them first, he could easily set boundaries to protect Bella and Dax. Even though they know about Dax, he will not allow them to meet him without Bella’s explicit permission, and he can guess that Bella will never allow that to happen.

Lewis feels relief when he hears that. Since he knew about Dax, he wanted to tell his son to stop them from trying to arrange a new marriage for Tristan. Still, he remembered Tristan had warned him not to say anything to anyone, including his parents.

Because he was afraid his grandson would be angry, Lewis had no choice but to keep his mouth shut until today.

“Good! It would be better if they found out from you directly than from someone else.” Lewis smiled at Tristan, feeling satisfied with his plan. “Don’t worry about anything. I will stand behind you if they trouble you.”

“I know... And thank you, Grandpa.”

However, a few seconds later, Lewis’ smile slowly faded. His eyes narrowed, looking Tristan in the eyes.

“Brat, this time, if you don’t take care of Bella and make her suffer again, I will take everything from you—your last name, your wealth, everything. So, you better keep your promise to old Donovan and me to always look after Bella and Dax!”

Tristan, “...”

This was the second time Tristan had witnessed his Grandpa talking earnestly to him like this. The first time his grandfather scolded him was when his grandfather found out he was divorcing Bella. And, hearing his words now, he felt a slight chill.

“Grandfather, believe me, you won’t have the chance to do all that because this time, my marriage to Bella is not because you forced me... but because I love her with all my heart.”

Tristan’s smile gradually appears before he continues, “I will take care of my wife until the end of my life, and so will our son, Dax. So, don’t worry about things that will never happen, Grandpa.”

Lewis chuckled, hearing his confidence. “Alright, you can go now...”

Tristan happily left the room, impatient to accompany Bella.

On the second floor, in the main bedroom,

Bella could only smile bitterly when she saw Noora and Geoffrey’s work, arranging Tristan’s clothes in the walk-in closet.

Seeing her clothes side by side with Tristan’s clothes somehow made the strange feeling in her heart emerge again. She could only smile as she returned to the bedroom.

Bella had no plans other than to take a nap, but when her eyes saw the cell phone on the table, she decided to forget her badly needed nap.

After grabbing her cell phone, she settles on the couch and starts to check whether she received something important.

Her heart was pounding when she saw several missed calls from Stefan. She immediately contacted him. And as usual, Stefan immediately picked up the phone.

“Sister, you finally called...” Stefan’s worried tone could be heard from the other end.

“You trace me?” Bella could guess Stefan’s worry referring to her visiting the hospital.

“Yes. I know you are sick now. How’s your condition?”

“Never better! I am just exhausted from work. Don’t worry too much.”

“Glad to hear that, sis.”

“Thank you, Stefan. Oh, right... I hope you didn’t call just because you worry about my condition.” She chuckled when she heard him laugh. “Any good news?”

Stefan suddenly focused again; he did have a lot of reports he wanted to tell her, especially about Laura Kiels.

“Sis, I’ve finished gathering evidence to turn the situation around. Do you want to strike back at that bitch Laura Kiels now?” He asked excitedly.

“Perfect, Stefan!” Bella’s eyes sparkled with joy. But later, her smile faded, and in a hurry, she said, “Wait, wait... let’s not spread our counterattack. I need to ask my legal team to sue them all. I will make sure Laura Kiels’ entire army is detained and let them tell the world who Laura really is.”

“Ha ha ha, that’s a good idea, sis. Is there anything else you want me to do about Laura?”

“How about someone who paid her debt? Did you find anything suspicious?”

“No. She paid for everything using her bank account. I’m not yet doing any deep research about that. Do you want me to investigate this further?” Stefan asked.

Bella was silent, thinking about something.

She doubted Laura Kiels’s ability to pay all the compensation money, but she knew Stefan had many things to do; he was pretty busy.

After a few more seconds, Bella finally responded, “Stefan, if you have time, just pay attention to her. If she does anything strange, report it to me immediately.”

“Sure, sis... No worries. I already put many traps in her gadget.” Stefan laughs, thinking that Laura will never escape from him unless she doesn’t use her gadget to communicate with others.

“Sis, I have to do something now. Talk to you later...”

However, before Stefan ended the phone call, Bella remembered something.

“Stefan, wait a moment. How about my brother? Did you find anything interesting about him!?”

Bella almost forgot about Henry, and her father plots to marry her to an old man. She must prepare something to make them stop their cunning plan against her.

“Damn! Your brother is completely different from you, sister. He is so fucking terrible.” Stefan can’t help but curse when he remembers Henry Donovan’s matter.

After digging into an investigation into Henry Donovan, he can’t believe that man is Bella’s brother. He has many women out there to sleep with. He is also drug-addicted.

“What do you mean, Stefan?” Bella wanted to know what made Stefan curse when he talked about her brother.

Stefan immediately tells her a few things that Henry did in the past.

After a few more minutes, Bella chuckled. She already knows how much worse her brother was.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 193: Tristan Knows About Her Father’s Shameless Plan

“What do you want me to do to your brother?” Stefan asked after he hadn’t heard her say anything.

Bella took a deep breath while pinching her forehead. She suddenly felt dizzy after thinking about the new scheme her family would do to her—marrying her to an older man, the same age as her own father. Gosh!

She never understood why her father was obsessed with arranging a marriage for her. Even though she is no longer young, her father is still busy intervening in her life.

How shameless!

“Don’t do anything to my brother. But just watch him for me. You know what to do, right? If he has bad intentions towards me, you must report it to me, Stefan.” She will deal with Henry later because she focuses on actions against Laura Kiels.

“Sis, I read something terrible in your big bro’s chat log,” Stefan’s worried tone no longer surprised Bella. She could guess what he would say but kept silent, hearing him continue to speak.

“Your jerk big bro and father want to do something to hurt you; their plot is terrible to you, sis. I suggest you ask Jack to send an additional guard to protect you...and Dax...”

Bella was slightly stunned when she heard that. Did they make another scheme against her and the people she cares about? She feels curious.

“What is it? Can you tell me what their plan is?”

“They set you up...” said Stefan in an annoyed tone. He had never met a parent who behaved so vilely towards his daughter.

“Oh, I know that. Anything else?”

“Yes. Well, your big bro suggests to your father that if you refuse to follow their arrangement, your bro will ask his friend to kidnap you. And, sis, you will not believe who your father wanted you to marry...” Stefan felt unable to continue his sentence and felt sorry for her.

“Thanks for the information, Stefan... But I already know about the person,” Bella responds. She took a deep breath to fill her stuffy heart with as much fresh air as possible before continuing her words.

“You know what? My father is another shameless man that I have ever encountered in my life.” Bella said. How dare her father arrange a marriage with an older man?

Bella felt her heartache again, remembering how her father had treated her all this time. Sometimes, she thought that Lucas Donovan was not her birth father; she was an adopted child.

“I know? How could a father have such shameless plans for his daughter? If I’m there, I will come to him and confront him...” Stefan sounded annoyed. Even though Bella wasn’t his biological sister, he felt sorry for Bella having a father like that.

“Ha ha ha... Thank you, Stefan, for your nice words. But you don’t need to feel sorry for me because I’m used to it...”

Bella laughed and tried to cheer herself up even though she felt like a dagger piercing her heart—her heart ached. Her father, who was supposed to love her, instead became the first person to hurt and betray her.

“Okay, Sis, I have to go now. I have sent all my report files to your email. You should check all the files because I found many interesting things in my investigation of Laura Kiels and Henry Donovan.”

“Thanks, Stefan, for your hard work.”

After ending her call with Steffan, Bella immediately checked her email to find out what crimes her brother had committed.

Bella was curious to know about Henry because she was sure that by now, Henry would have arrived at their house to report to their father about what had happened the previous day at the restaurant.

However, before Bella could read the files, Tristan’s voice stopped her.

“What’s your father doing to you this time?” Tristan asked calmly, but Bella, who heard that, felt like anger carried in his tone.

Bella immediately turned her gaze towards the door. She saw him walking towards her after he closed the door behind him.

She didn’t say anything immediately. Her eyes followed Tristan until he was sitting next to her, and her heart began to race as their arms touched as he moved.

After her heart calmed down, Bella finally asked him instead of answering his question, “Since when did you hear my conversation?”

Tristan slowly took a deep breath before taking her delicate hands.

He lowered his eyes to see their hands on his lap and tried to guess what her family wanted to do to her. He knew how badly Bella’s father treated his own daughter.

Tristan regretted that he only found out everything when Bella was gone. However, now, he swore to himself that he would make things right for Bella.

After Tristan gently squeezed Bella’s hand to give her courage, he slowly raised his head again to look her in the eye.

“Your brother is planning to do something evil to you? Please give me a chance to help you, Bella...” he said while smiling sincerely at her.

‘So he heard about my family matter!’

Bella felt that she no longer needed to hide this matter from Tristan.

She should tell him. But she can't accept his help yet because she doesn't want her parents to know about her relationship with Tristan. They will probably use the Sinclair Group name again.

Certainly not!

Bella didn't want that to happen again when her father treated her as just an object of their business.

She turned her gaze elsewhere as she couldn't bear to look Tristan in the eye when telling him about this matter.

"Tristan, you won't believe what my parents want to do to me. My father is trying to arrange a new marriage for me with his friend, who is the same age as him." Bella faintly said, feeling ashamed to talk about this to Tristan.

"WHAT!? Repeat it?"

Bella turned to look at him. When she saw his face turn red, like all the blood was now rushing under his skin, she could only shake her head slowly with a wry smile.

"You heard that, Tristan. I won't repeat it again... My shameless father even wants to force me to follow this new marriage agreement...with his friend. An old guy of the same age as him!"

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 194: I Will Respect You And Wait

Grinding his teeth in frustration, Tristan tried hard not to show anger, but his cold tone betrayed him. "How could your father do that? Bella, I will meet your father to let him know about our relationship."

This was the only way to stop Bella's father from arranging a match for her. Like his parents, he will also prevent them from doing such actions.

"No, please don't do that, Tristan! My father will be even happier if you come to see him. He will use your name again to advance his business. He will wrongly use your company's name." She said helplessly.

Bella could imagine what her father and uncle would do if they found out about her status, still Tristan Sinclair's legal wife.

Indeed, they would shamelessly boast to their business partners, as they did in the past; they are pressuring others because Sinclair Group has a billion-dollar project with the Donovan Group in East City.

She would never let that happen again, so she had thought of another solution to deal with them.

“Bella, I won’t hide our relationship anymore like before. This time, I will proudly announce that you are my wife. And, when your father finds out about us, he will definitely step back. He will not dare to do such a shameless thing again...”

Bella silently took a deep breath and felt déjà vu.

She wanted their relationship announced in the past, but an under-the-table agreement between their parents made that impossible. But now, when she tried to keep a low profile, this man wanted to reveal their relationship.

Gosh!

Bella immediately warns Tristan about her concerns—how her parents might take advantage of him—and she doesn’t want past events to happen again.

“What you said is true. But, Bella, you don’t have to worry about them using me. I could handle your parents...” Tristan said. He couldn’t hide how happy he was to know how worried Bella was about him.

“But now, now. I will take care of my family matters myself.”

“Alright, dear...” Tristan said as he raised his hand to touch her cheek gently, but his expression suddenly turned worried when he felt her body hot, a little warmer than usual.

“Is your fever returning?” Tristan asked worriedly, placing his hand on her forehead to feel her temperature.

“Huh!? Really?” Bella was surprised. She felt fine, but seeing Tristan’s worried expression, she also placed her hand on her forehead to check her temperature.

When she felt her skin a little warm, Bella immediately stood up and looked for her bag.

“I need to recheck my body temperature,” she said calmly, not wanting to make Tristan worry. However, the man already panicked.

“I will call my personal doctor to fly here...”

Bella’s steps stopped. She turned to Tristan and couldn’t help but smile when she saw he was about to make a call.

“Tristan, there’s no need. I’m fine. Trust me. I still have the medicine the doctor gave me...” Bella tried to stop him from doing this unreasonable act. How could he easily ask his doctor to fly from the capital to Nova City just to check her fever?

“Are you sure you are okay?” Tristan stood up from his seat and approached her.

“Yes.” Bella took a thermometer out of her bag. After she checked her temperature, she found it was a little high but not dangerous. Then, she handed the thermometer to Tristan to see it.

“Thirty-seven point five degrees Celsius?” He said worriedly.

“It’s not that bad, Tristan...” Bella answered calmly while taking fever-reducing medicine.

“Are you sure, Bella?”

“Mmm, it seems... my body hasn’t fully rested yet, so my fever is still there. I just need to take the pills and sleep, and I’ll be fine. Stop worrying.”

“But—”

“If you are concerned like this and Dax sees you, he might be sad and worried to know his mother is sick...” Bella was amused when she saw Tristan suddenly nod to agree with her.

“Okay. Now, you should rest!” he says while taking her to bed. “I’ll wake you up at lunch. You still have an hour to sleep.”

Bella accepted his suggestion. She knew her current condition was too stressful and tiring. She really needed a lot of rest. However, when she lay in bed and saw Tristan about to sleep next to her, something came back to her mind—her worries about them sharing the same bed.

“Tristan, I think it’s too early for us to sleep in the same bed...” Bella stopped her words when she saw Tristan’s expression stiffen as he sat back on the edge of the bed, looking at her confused.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean,” Bella swallowed slowly after feeling her throat suddenly dry. Her hands under the blanket clenched into fists before continuing her words, “I need time to be able to sleep in the same bed with you again.”

“Bella, we are husband and wife—”

“I know,” Bella interrupted his words. “But we’ve been apart for more than five years. Tristan, I need time to adjust and prepare myself again. It feels weird to me, sleeping with you now...”

Tristan was stunned to hear her request but tried to understand it. He didn’t say any words; he just looked into her eyes while trying to think of something.

After a few moments of silence, Tristan finally smiled at her before responding, “Okay. I won’t force you, Bella. I’ll respect your request and wait until you are ready...”

“Thank you.” Bella feels relieved.

“But, Bella, please don’t ask me to sleep in another room.”

Bella’s hands clenched tighter. She plans to ask that, too, but looking at his pleading gaze softens her heart.

“It’s okay if I have to sleep on the floor or the sofa,” Tristan continued, making Bella feel even more guilty.

She opened her mouth to say something, but the sentence she wanted to say seemed to be stuck on the tip of her tongue.

Seeing Bella looking worried, Tristan leaned closer and said, “If you’re so worried about me sleeping on the floor, let me sleep next to you?”

Bella glared at him.

“Ha Ha Ha...” Tristan burst out laughing when he saw her angry reaction. “I’ll sleep on the couch if that makes you feel better.”

She didn’t say anything, but her expression was still the same.

“But Bella... Please don’t let me sleep on the sofa for too long,” said Tristan pleadingly while gently stroking her blushing cheek.

Bella pulled the blanket up and covered almost her entire face, stopping Tristan to touch her cheek. He chuckled at her.

“I need to sleep now...” Bella quickly turned her back to him, worried she would change her mind about letting him sleep in bed.

Ultimately, Bella and Tristan finally agree to start a new chapter in their lives.

...

Some people may think that choosing Tristan again was a foolish decision. Still, she has carefully considered it for the sake of her future and her son, Dax.

She gave Tristan a second chance because, in the past months, she had seen his sincerity and knew what had happened in the past were all just misunderstandings.

Now, Bella just wants to be happy with Dax and Tristan.

She will not allow other people to ruin her happiness this time, even when her parents or in-laws come in between; she will be prepared this time. Knowing Tristan and their Grandfather wouldn't let the past repeat itself either made her feel comfortable starting over with him.

Hi, this is the end of Volume 2: RETURNS.

I will upload Volume 3 the next day: New Beginning.

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Author Notes:

I get that many of you disagree with Bella's choice to be back with Tristan and want her to be with Sean instead. If you read again from the beginning, you will understand why Bella made such a choice. She had never stopped loving Tristan and could never love Sean the way she loves Tristan. Also, she only wants to be happy, and she's fully aware that if she's forcing herself to love Sean and into the Spencer family, she will end up hurting herself and everyone else. But, of course, Sean's story will continue; he'll be back soon to add the spice. Please, Sean fans, don't hate me ^____^

I hope you continue to follow the adorable story of Bella, Tristan, and Dax. For the third volume, we will focus on how Bella and Tristan deal with their family and public opinion and how Bella continues to pursue her career even after becoming a wife again.

Thank you very much to all of you who are still with me until this chapter. I am genuinely grateful to all of you who have supported me. And for those of you who were disappointed with the storyline, I apologize. I hope you still support me. If not, I hope we meet in my other story. Thank you all.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 195: The First Time She Saw Him Wake Up in The Morning
Next morning.

When Bella woke up in the morning, she faintly heard a sound from the sofa.

Worried that someone would enter her room without permission, Bella hurriedly sat on the bed and looked towards the sofa. She was surprised to see Tristan still sleeping there.

'Gosh! How could I forget this man sharing the same room with me?' Bella shook her head as she brushed her hair with her finger and created a simple bun.

Bella still couldn't believe the two of them were now sharing the same room. And she was amused to make a powerful and wealthy businessman in this country, Tristan Sinclair, sleep on the sofa.

She would become a public enemy if people found out, especially all the women who adored him.

Bella could only laugh inwardly when she imagined all the women would curse her.

After laughing to herself and feeling much better, she pushed aside the blanket and got out of bed to approach him.

She was surprised that there was no pillow to support Tristan's head because now he was curled up while hugging his pillow.

Seeing his sleeping position made Bella feel sorry because the three-seater sofa was insufficient for a 6.1-sized man to sleep comfortably on.

After looking at his handsome, calm face for a few seconds, Bella checked the clock beside the bed; it was still early, not even six o'clock.

She bent down slightly and held Tristan's shoulders, shaking him gently to wake him up.

"Tristan, sorry to wake you. You can move to bed. Sleeping here isn't comfortable for you," she whispered.

When Bella saw Tristan's eyes tremble and his eyelashes flutter, she immediately straightened her back to put some distance between them. Still, before she could do so, Tristan's hand had already grabbed her, stopping her from taking a few steps back.

Bella was surprised. Her body was pulled towards Tristan again. She almost fell on top of his body if she didn't grab the edge of the couch with her other hand.

"What are you doing, Tristan Sinclair?" Bella snapped, glaring at him. She was now half kneeling on the floor, her face so close to him. When she saw him smile, she tried to withdraw her hand, but his thighs gripped her, making her unable to stand.

"Morning, dear..." Tristan's hoarse voice greeted her instead of answering her question. His smile grew wider when he saw Bella's annoyance.

"You—"

Tristan continued his words while feasting his eyes on her beauty, "You know, Bella? I feel like God immediately answered my prayer; I can see your cute expression in the morning as soon as I wake up..."

Bella held herself back from laughing when she heard his cheesy lines this early morning. She looked elsewhere, avoiding eye contact with him.

Seeing Tristan's handsome appearance in the morning made her heart beat fast, and she could feel her cheeks now feeling warm. After so many years together, they lived in the same house, but only today could she see this man awake in the morning.

"Tristan, you can sleep on the bed," she said without looking at him.

Tristan was shocked to hear her words; Bella asked him to sleep in the bed.

Countless questions now filled his mind as he looked at her. Why did she suddenly change her mind? Last night, she rejected the idea of them sharing the same bed.

Afraid he had misheard, Tristan asked, "B-Bella, are you serious? We can sleep in the same bed!?"

Bella was a little confused hearing Tristan's reaction. She turned to face him, wanting to clarify something, but her words stopped when she saw him sitting on the sofa and helped her up.

"Are you serious? I can sleep in bed." He asks again after Bella sits next to him.

"Hmm, you can sleep there. You still have an hour to sleep before breakfast," Bella answered with a smile, realizing the light in his eyes was getting brighter.

Tristan immediately stood up and walked to the bed while carrying his pillow. A smile slowly appeared when he realized Bella was finally willing to sleep with him.

Bella felt unreal seeing Tristan walking towards the bed carrying a pillow. His hair looked messy, and he was only wearing a T-shirt.

How could the almighty Tristan Sinclair look like this? She felt amused watching this side of him.

In the past, when Bella woke up in the morning, she never found Tristan in her bed because he had already returned to his bedroom. When they met, she only saw him wearing a suit.

“What are you waiting for, Bella? Come sleep with me...”

Bella was stunned hearing his words. She looked at him, lying on the bed with his head glancing in her direction.

‘Humph! Why did he think I would sleep with him?’ Bella wondered as she narrowed her eyes at him. A few seconds later, something crossed her mind, and a faint smile slowly appeared as she realized Tristan was wrongly hearing her words.

Geez!

“Tristan, I just asked you to move to bed but didn’t say I would sleep with you...”

Tristan was stunned as he sat on the edge of the bed and looked at Bella. Feeling embarrassed, he said, “It’s still early. You’d better sleep here, and I’ll return to the sofa.”

“No need. I’m getting enough sleep. I’ll just read something on my laptop,” she said, then walked towards the study table. However, before she could reach the table, Tristan stopped her.

“I’m sorry, Bella. But this time, you have to listen to me. You can work later, but not now. Last night, we spent hours talking, and knowing you only got a little sleep worries me.” Tristan held her hand and led her to bed.

“I’m fine now.”

“I remember you spent hours meeting with Leo and Sam yesterday. Did something happen at your company? Do you need my help handling the issue with Laura Kiels? That woman is starting to make me angry!” Tristan said as he helped her lay on the bed.

Hearing his earnest offer, Bella immediately said, “No thanks...”

She didn’t want Tristan involved in her office matter.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!

Chapter 196: Worry About His Mommy (1)

Hearing his earnest offer, Bella immediately said, “No thanks...” She didn’t want Tristan involved in her office matter.

“Bella, are you sure?” Tristan asked. He wanted to help her. “I can see what happened between your company and that woman on the internet. And the more I read the news,

the angrier I become.” He paused to take a deep breath before continuing. “You know someone paid those people to ruin your company, right?”

Bella nods before responding, “Thank you for your concern, Tristan. But my team will take care of everything.” She tries to avoid further conversation about her office matter.

Yesterday, Bella finished all her business with Celebes Energy. What is pending now is to take care of corrupt officials messing with the company. She was in no rush to take care of them because Stefan, her hacker, had not yet provided a detailed report.

She is also preparing to take action against Laura Kiels. They have obtained the identities of many perpetrators who damaged Stellar Entertainment’s name on the internet, and several journalists created fake news about Stellar Entertainment.

They will file a lawsuit today. After that, they will finally make an official statement.

Bella has asked Stefan to slowly release on the internet Laura Kiels’ evil actions, starting with cases of drunk driving and her hobbies to the use of illegal drugs. Besides that, her rude personality towards her staff and many more. News about her will soon become a trending topic in this country.

Because there was no more work here, Bella asked Leo and Sam to return to the capital.

...

“Okay, but if you need my help, please talk to me, Bella. Please let me know. I mean it...” Tristan stated.

“Sure, Tristan...” Bella responds to him with a smile. She feels grateful to hear someone standing behind her to help.

After Tristan saw her relax and slowly close her eyes, he lay down next to her, causing Bella to open her eyes again and squint at him as if to tell him, “Don’t break your promise, Mr. Tristan Sinclair.”

Tristan chuckled when he saw her adorable-annoyed expression. He ignored her stern warning and helped her adjust her blanket. Then, he relaxed his back, feeling satisfied that Bella didn’t kick him off the bed.

After a few minutes, Tristan could still feel Bella hadn’t slept, and she seemed alert. A faint smile slowly appeared on the corners of his lips.

“Trust me, Bella. I won’t do anything to you. You can rest assured...” He said without looking at her. He only looked at the ceiling. Then, he slowly closed his eyes and pretended to sleep.

Bella smiled silently when she saw Tristan finally fall asleep again. She knew he couldn't sleep well last night because she saw him sleeping on the sofa in an uncomfortable position.

She yawned. Slowly, she feels sleepy again. She closed her eyes and tried to sleep more.

After thirty minutes, Tristan glanced at Bella.

Tristan smiled when he saw her sleeping with her face facing him. Seeing how calm and beautiful her face looked while sleeping was enough to make his hand slowly rise to touch her flushed cheek.

However, when Tristan was about to touch Bella's cheek, a faint knock on the door stopped him.

He glanced at the door with a frown on his face, worried that Bella would hear the knock.

Feeling displeased that someone dared to wake them up so early in the morning, he immediately stood up from the bed, wanting to know who the person was. He marched to the door with a stern expression.

However, as the door opened, Tristan's expression gradually changed to joy when he saw Dax smile at him, "Good morning, Dad..."

Tristan lowered his head to meet his son's gaze and smiled, looking at him still in his pajamas.

"Good morning, buddy. Why do you wake up so early? You didn't have a workout today, right?"

Tristan had heard from Geoffrey these two days that Dax had no training to let him rest before they returned to the capital on Sunday.

"Yes, Dad. But I'm hungry..." Dax said while trying to peek into the room, looking for his mother.

It's still early for breakfast. They usually prepare breakfast at seven in the morning. Now it is thirty minutes earlier than seven.

"Do you want to go down now? We can ask the chef to prepare your breakfast earlier..." Tristan offered. When he saw Dax's curious gaze to look inside and ignored his words, he smiled.

“Dad, why is mom still sleeping? I want to see her...” Dax asked worriedly when he saw his mother still asleep under the blanket.

Tristan didn’t answer. He carried Dax to their room and whispered, “Mom exhausted, so I let her sleep a little longer before we go down for breakfast.”

He places Dax sitting on the edge of the bed.

Dax turned to see his mother. After a while, he looked at his father with his usual deadpan expression.

Meanwhile, Bella faintly heard Dax’s voice. She slowly opened her eyes and smiled, looking at her son in their room. Just before she wanted to call Dax, she heard their talk. She thought better of it, curious to listen to what they discussed.

“Dad, why do you make my mother tired all night?” Dax’s voice sounded displeased with his father.

Tristan silently gulped, hearing his sudden question. Instantly, he could feel his blood running cold.

‘Is he thinking what I’m thinking...’ Tristan wondered.

How could this four-year-old kid know such a thing?

Tristan cleared his throat as he looked into his son’s eyes, “Dax, what were you thinking? Why do you think I made your mother tired?” he asked carefully.

“You chat with her a lot all night, right? That’s why my Mommy is still sleeping now...” Dax took a deep breath and crossed his arms over his chest, waiting for his father to answer.

Tristan is relieved when he hears Dax’s words.

He was frightened that his four-year-old son would think he was doing intimate work that exhausted his mother.

“I’m sorry, buddy. Daddy will not do that again,” Tristan said, gently patting his back.

Come back and read more tomorrow, everyone!