

N Destiny 2341

Chapter 2341

Just then, someone was about to enter from outside, so Shirley reached out and opened the door. It was Imogen who came in carrying some documents. She said, "Shirley, these are documents from the security department. They need to be delivered to Mr. Flintstone for his signature."

"Alright, you can take them to his study," Shirley replied.

"I don't know where his study is. You should take them up," Imogen suggested.

After a nod, Shirley took the documents and was ready to go. Yet, Jesslyn pointed at her retreating figure and said, "Stop right there. I'm not done yet."

Imogen immediately looked at Jesslyn, surprised that this girl dared to shout at Shirley. Does she not know Shirley's identity?

On the other hand, Shirley was getting annoyed. She turned to glare at Jesslyn and said, "Miss Kurt, this is not the place for your tantrums. If you want to throw a fit, do it at your own home."

Having grown up in a privileged environment, Jesslyn was not used to being talked to like this. She retorted, "This is the Flintstone Residence, and it's my home. I can do whatever I want here. Even Zacharias doesn't mind. Who are you, a mere bodyguard, to order me around?"

At this point, Imogen immediately realized Jesslyn's status. So, she's close to Zacharias. It seems like she's not aware of Shirley's background, thinking that Shirley is just an ordinary bodyguard.

She was lost in thought for a second while Shirley had already gone upstairs. Jesslyn couldn't help but turn to Imogen, asking, "You're a female bodyguard too. Why is she the only one living here?"

"I'm new here," Imogen replied. Jesslyn immediately understood that the newcomers had little opportunity because Shirley had stolen the spotlight.

“Has Shirley offended you?” Imogen asked. Jesslyn snorted, her eyes filled with resentment. She has done more than just offend me; she’s practically competing with me for a man. After all, which woman wouldn’t dream of becoming the vice president’s wife? It was something she dreamed of every day.

“Alright, Jesslyn. Let’s have some fun. I’ll take you out in the afternoon,” said Tony, trying to console her.

As Imogen watched Jesslyn being led away by Tony, a sly smile tugged at her lips. She stood at the door, waiting for Shirley to come downstairs.

After Shirley placed the documents on Zacharias’ desk, she went downstairs. When she saw Imogen was still waiting there, she walked over and had a brief conversation with her. “Are you adapting well, Imogen?”

“I’m fine, but I have to wait to get assigned tasks.”

“You’ll get your turn.” Shirley comforted her.

Suddenly, Imogen asked, “Shirley, where’s the restroom? I really need to go.”

Shirley pointed in a direction and replied, “It’s over there.”

Imogen headed there immediately. Outside the restroom, she noticed that Jesslyn was nearby. Suddenly, she devised a plan and picked up a small stone from a nearby potted plant and then threw it at Jesslyn’s head.

With her precision and skill, Jesslyn screamed in pain when the stone hit her. However, when Jesslyn turned around, there was no one behind her.

“Who’s there? Who did this?” Jesslyn held her head in pain. Though she didn’t see anyone, she suspected it was Shirley. She surely possesses the necessary skills as a bodyguard.

Meanwhile, Imogen had returned to the living room, and she bade farewell to Shirley. "See you, Shirley."

With that, she pushed the door open and left. At the same moment, a fuming Jesslyn came from another direction. She pointed at Shirley and accused, "How dare you throw a stone at me just now?"

Hearing that, Shirley was taken aback. I didn't do it, but if she's really been hit, it's likely the work of Imogen. "I didn't throw anything at you," she responded. However, she couldn't reveal that it was Imogen's doing.

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Imogen didn't deny it and replied, 'She was scolding you, so I couldn't stand it and taught her a lesson. Did I cause you trouble?'

Shirley didn't consider this trouble, of course. Jesslyn's arrogance was getting on her nerves as well. 'No, she needed to be taught a lesson.'

'Shirley, do you have to be afraid of her with your status? I can't stand seeing you treated like this. If I were you, I would have put her in her place a long time ago. Imogen wrote.

Being rational, Shirley didn't want to cause trouble during her internship, so she answered, 'Imogen, here, I'm just an intern bodyguard.'

Imogen responded, 'Okay. I know you're modest.' Meanwhile, Jesslyn had taken refuge in Tony's room to complain about Shirley's actions to Zacharias.

"What did you say? She threw a stone at you?"

"Yes, my head has a swollen bump now. It hurts so much. You must come back and teach her a lesson," Jesslyn said while sobbing.

"Alright, I'll take care of it," Zacharias assured her.

“You should fire her, Zacharias. I don’t like her staying around you.”

“You should go back now. I’ll handle this matter, he calmly said, ending the call.

Soon after, Shirley’s phone rang. When she glanced at the screen, she noticed it was an incoming call from Zacharias. She had a pretty good idea about the reason for this call. “Hello,” she answered.

“Did you throw a stone at Jesslyn?” Zacharias inquired from the other end.

Shirley had no choice but to admit it because Imogen was new and had acted on her behalf to teach Jesslyn a lesson. “Yes,” she replied.

“What exactly happened?” he asked again.

“Nothing. It’s just that I didn’t like her,” she responded. Suddenly, a chuckle came from his side before he said, “Alright, I won’t allow her to appear in front of you from now on.”

She was taken aback by this response, for she had expected him to be angry, but he was surprisingly protective of her. This caught her off guard.

“Why are you not saying anything?” His gentle voice came through.

“I hit her. Aren’t you angry?” Shirley asked.

“Of course not. I know she must have provoked you first. Your reaction was justified,” Zacharias said.

His unwavering trust made her heart flutter a little. Shirley blinked and finally said, “Thank you for trusting me.”

“Alright, see you later,” he said before hanging up.

He's coming home? Meanwhile, in Tony's room, Jesslyn was seething with anger. She no longer had any good mood left, and her only desire was to use this incident to force Zacharias to dismiss Shirley.

"I'll definitely make Zacharias fire that wretched bodyguard and never hire her again," she said, clenching her fists.

"You should drop it, Jesslyn," Tony suggested, knowing that her wish was impossible to come true. Uncle Zacharias will never fire Shirley. I can already tell that Jesslyn's accusations won't make much of a difference.

"Why should I drop it? Do you think that I'm less important to Zacharias than a mere bodyguard?"

Tony thought, Yes, you are less important.

"Jesslyn, I know of a fantastic new restaurant. I'll treat you to lunch. Let's go." He wanted to get her out of the house before she made things even more awkward..

"Until Zacharias comes back, I'm not going anywhere." She insisted on waiting for Zacharias to come back to handle this matter.

"She's not just any bodyguard, Jesslyn. Uncle Zacharias will just make her apologize at most after he comes back. If you're hoping he will fire her, that's impossible," he explained.

"Why is it impossible? Tell me," she turned around and asked.

At this moment, he committed a slip of the tongue. "Because Uncle Zacharias likes..." Fortunately, he shut his mouth just in time. Not fully understanding, she squinted her eyes and asked, "What did you say?"

"N-Nothing. I just meant to say that Uncle Zacharias really appreciates this female bodyguard, and he won't fire her."

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“Before, she never bothered me, but now that she has, Zacharias will definitely fire her.” Jesslyn grew more confident in her thoughts. She believed that by playing the card of her childhood friendship with Zacharias, a mere bodyguard wouldn’t stand a chance.

Secretly, Tony rolled his eyes at her attitude. Though he was a man, he had no good impression of a girl like her; instead, he was disgusted. How can she lack so much self-awareness? Initially, he had wanted to help her out of sympathy and prevent her from ruining her life, but now it seemed she was determined to do so on her own.

“Jesslyn, do you know what kind of girls Uncle Zacharias likes?”

Immediately, she showed interest. “What kind?”

“He likes sensible and reasonable girls.”

“Are you suggesting that I’m unreasonable?” she asked indignantly, thinking that he was making fun of her..

He quickly waved his hand and chuckled. “No, absolutely not. You’re the most reasonable girl I’ve ever met. By the way, let me go out for a moment.”

After he left the room, he headed over to Shirley’s room. He knocked on her door, and Shirley opened it from the inside. “What’s wrong, Mr. Tony?”

With a somewhat exasperated expression, Tony placed his hands on his hips as he looked at her. “We’re already so close. Why are you being so formal?”

She smiled at his words. “Do you need anything from me?”

“Did you throw a stone at Jesslyn? She’s demanding that Uncle Zacharias fire you.”

“Oh,” she replied nonchalantly. Seeing her calm demeanor, he said with a smile, “I know Uncle Zacharias won’t fire you.”

“Why?” she asked.

“Don’t act like you don’t know. He’s so fond of you; he wouldn’t bear to fire you,” Tony explained.

At his words, Shirley immediately let out a cough. “Please don’t spread this kind of information around, Mr. Tony. It might lead to misunderstandings.”

Tony pointed to his eyes and said, “I saw it with my own eyes. It can’t be fake. Don’t worry. I won’t tell anyone. I’ll keep it a secret until Uncle Zacharias wins you over.”

Regardless, she couldn’t do anything with him.

“Mr. Flintstone is on his way back.”

“Wow! He’s even giving up his work for you,” he teased. Shirley couldn’t help but glare at him. “Stop saying such things.”

As he scrutinized her from head to toe, he fearlessly said, “Having you be my aunt is not a bad idea.”

Shirley’s hand shot up instantly, and Tony immediately burst into laughter and ran to the other end of the corridor.

Upon seeing that, she couldn’t help but be amused by his antics. She leaned against the door frame, turned her face, and glanced at her bed. Thinking about that drunken night when Zacharias escorted her to her room, and she mistook him for Cole when she kissed him made her blush. Such incidents can never happen again.

Just then, Jesslyn came out of Tony's room, seething with anger as she approached Shirley's door. As she touched the back of her head, which was still sore from being hit, she couldn't be satisfied with just a few curses.

"Get out here," she demanded arrogantly as she stood at Shirley's door with her hands on her hips. Shirley wasn't one to back down from a fight, so she opened the door and looked at Jesslyn. "Do you need something, Miss Kurt?"

Jesslyn sneered. "You better pack your bags right now. When Zacharias returns, you'll need to get out of here immediately."

Unfazed, Shirley crossed her arms and replied, "I can do that after Mr. Flintstone returns."

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In the end, Shirley kept her emotions under control and decided to ignore Jesslyn. Turning around, she wanted to close the door, but Jesslyn snapped at this point and yanked her waist-length ponytail violently. "Take this!" she shouted, wanting to injure her as revenge.

Shirley felt the jolt of pain, and her head jerked backward. With a sharp glint in her eyes, she warned, "Let go."

"No, I won't," Jesslyn declared while pulling Shirley's hair with all her might. This time, however, it ticked Shirley off. Since she's the one who started the fight first, I call this self-defense. In a swift move, she twirled, grabbed Jesslyn's wrist, and gripped tightly.

"Ouch!" This was no force that Jesslyn could take, and she shrieked in pain.

However, Shirley didn't stop there. Even in pain, Jesslyn kicked her legs around aimlessly at Shirley, who swept her leg under her feet, and the former fell to the floor on her chest. Then, Shirley locked both of her arms behind her back and pushed her to the floor like a criminal.

Shirley snorted and asked, "Do you dare try this again?"

“Ouch! Let go! It hurts! Let me go now!” Jesslyn’s face was literally on the floor, and she was incredibly disgusted by it. Not only that, she felt that her arms were about to snap. This wasn’t the kind of humiliation she could tolerate.

Shirley applied pressure on her again, and she squealed, ‘Ouch!’

‘Do you yield?’ Shirley asked angrily.

“No!” Jesslyn shouted. Zacharias happened to return and heard her shouting. While removing his coat, he rushed upstairs.

From the room, Tony heard the scream and dashed out as well. Seeing that his uncle was back, he shared a look with him, and they walked briskly toward the corridor on the second floor. The next thing they saw was Shirley close to the door, pinning Jesslyn on the floor and treating her like a criminal.

Painful and helpless, Jesslyn heard footsteps approaching and saw Zacharias when she raised her head. As though she had seen her ray of hope, she wept loudly, “Zacharias, save me! She’s hurting me!”

Shirley released her at this time and stood up. looking at Zacharias. This time, this man is going to be mad at me, isn’t he?

“Zacharias!” Shirley scrambled to her feet in her sorry state and threw herself headlong into Zacharias’ embrace, hugging his waist tightly. and sobbing uncontrollably. “She beat me up and even said that she was going to kill me. Zacharias, fire this mad woman now!” she sobbed, twisting the truth.

Furious, Shirley narrowed her eyes at Jesslyn.

“Jesslyn, are you telling the truth?” Even Tony found her account hard to believe because it was obvious that she was exaggerating.

Prying Jesslyn’s hands away, Zacharias set her aside and looked at her solemnly with his deep- set eyes. “Tell the truth, Jesslyn.”

"I'm telling the truth! Both of you saw how she pushed me to the floor earlier like a criminal!" Even Zacharias has seen it with his own eyes. There's no reason that he won't believe me, she thought.

Crossing her arms across her chest, Shirley listened to the way Jesslyn distorted the truth and waited to witness how Zacharias would side with her. She had no plans to explain herself or argue because anyone could see through Jesslyn's horrible acting.

Seeing that Jesslyn wasn't going to tell the truth, Zacharias shifted his gaze to Shirley. "You tell me."

His demand merely triggered Shirley. "It is whatever she says. I'll confess to everything."

In his heart, Tony silently gave her a thumbs-up for standing her ground.

"Zacharias, what I said is the truth. She has violent tendencies, and you shouldn't have someone like that working for you. That will put you in danger!"

When Jesslyn twisted the story so out of context, Shirley glanced at her as though she was a joke to her. "Miss Kurt, carry on with the storytelling."

"You-" Jesslyn's eyes were spitting fire from anger. In contrast to Shirley's composure, she seemed like someone who had lost her mind.

As Zacharias didn't want Jesslyn to continue embarrassing herself, he turned to Shirley helplessly. "Tell me what happened."

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"I'm not saying anything," Shirley insisted with a snort.

"I'll believe you," Zacharias added. Jesslyn stared at him squarely, gaping in disbelief. "Zacharias, why do you only believe her? Don't you believe me?"

Brushing past her, he stopped in front of Shirley and whispered, "As long as you tell me, I'll believe anything you say."

Shirley raised her head and met a pair of clear, rational eyes. "She pulled my hair, and I pinned her to the ground because I was so mad. Then, you guys came."

"Not only that. You even threw a stone at me, and the back of my head is still swollen from it," Jesslyn chirped hastily.

"That's because you provoked me first," Shirley argued.

"I just commented a little about you. Can't you even take a few comments?" Jesslyn snapped. Feeling even more aggrieved, she pointed at Shirley and whined, "Zacharias, give her the boot immediately."

Shirley turned to him at the same time, saying fearlessly, "Mr. Flintstone, if you would like to dismiss me, please feel free to do so."

Next to them, Tony had the urge to bring a chair over, together with some popcorn, to watch the scene. This is too exciting! Alas, the day arrives when Uncle Zacharias is in a dilemma between two women!

"Watch your tone! Do you think that Zacharias doesn't dare to fire you?" Jesslyn said in a huff.

"Please dismiss me as soon as possible, then," Shirley replied provocatively.

"Zacharias, dismiss her now!" She's not only provoking me but Zacharias now. I'm sure he won't take this attitude and fire this arrogant bodyguard!

It was true that Zacharias was in a dilemma; Jesslyn was unreasonable and stubborn, while Shirley was straightforward.

"Come on, Uncle Zacharias. Dismiss my goddess, and I'll hire her as my bodyguard right away." Meanwhile, there was another person who couldn't wait to see the issue grow bigger.

"Shut up." Glaring at Tony, Zacharias thought that he was unnecessarily excited.

“Zacharias, she’s just a mere bodyguard, and you have so many others,” Jesslyn urged.

“I don’t dare to dismiss her,” Zacharias said curtly.

“Why?” Jesslyn asked, widening her eyes.. There’s actually a person whom Zacharias is afraid of? And she’s just a mere bodyguard!

Knowing Jesslyn’s personality like the back of his hand, Zacharias had to announce Shirley’s upbringing because Jesslyn was a bully who was afraid of the tough. “Because she’s the great-niece of Mr. Oswald.” The only thing he mentioned about Shirley was this. As for her father’s identity, he reckoned that Jesslyn would have no idea how powerful he was even if he mentioned it.

Tony’s eyes almost fell out of its sockets. “What? My goddess is actually a member of the president’s family?”

With disbelief in her eyes, Jesslyn stared at Shirley, her mind blank from the shock. What? A simple bodyguard of Zacharias’ is from the president’s family? That explains why she’s so arrogant and fearless. It’s because her family background is tough!

“Knock it off and go home, Jesslyn,” Zacharias said, casting a look at Tony and hinting at him to take her away,

As Jesslyn gawked at Shirley, all the despise and contempt she had for her earlier had evaporated, and instead, she felt her face burning as though someone had given her a tight slap.

Immediately, Tony tugged her over. “Jesslyn, come on. Let’s go shopping.”

She gazed at Zacharias with an unbearable look in her eyes, unable to leave just like that. “Zacharias, 1-”

“Go home!” he ordered. “And stop coming here in the future. This is not your playground.”

When Jesslyn looked at Shirley again, there was no more haughtiness in her eyes. In its place was envy and jealousy. She's related to the Oswald Family. What a strong background she has.

"Let's go, Jesslyn. Let's get you a good meal tonight." Tony tugged at her again. This was a great out that he had created for her, and she decided to accept it, saying, "Okay, let's go."

Then, she left with Tony, and the moment they were gone, Zacharias looked at Shirley carefully. "Where are you hurting?"

She shook her head. "Nowhere."

Jesslyn had just gone downstairs when she noticed that her phone was still in Tony's room, and she rose up. "Tony, I'm going to get my phone. Wait for a moment."

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In quick steps, Jesslyn ran upstairs. At the top of the staircase, she couldn't stop herself from looking in the direction of Shirley, only to see that she was still standing there with Zacharias. Filled with disgruntlement, she wanted to eavesdrop on their conversation and heard Zacharias' voice. "I apologize to you on Jesslyn's behalf."

"You don't have to." Shirley shook her head and spun on her heels.

However, Zacharias grabbed her wrist and pulled her back. Losing her balance, Shirley fell back and landed right into his arms.

"Behave yourself, Zacharias," she said in annoyance.

"You're the one who didn't behave yourself first."

"I didn't-"

"Didn't you? Can you swear that you didn't act inappropriately with me that night?" When he thought about it, he became a little mad.

“I don’t remember anything about that night.” Shirley denied his word, although some snippets were crystal clear in her mind.

“Should I help you to recover your memory?” Smirking, he stared at her cherry lips.

“No-” Need for that. Her last few words were sealed by the man’s lips. She wanted to push him away, but he stopped her and held her hands above her head, pinning them against the wall next to them.

With his tall and well-built body pressed against her, she couldn’t seem to fight him off, even with her excellent combat skills.

This scene stunned Jesslyn, who was in the foyer, and she covered her mouth with her hands because she was scared to make a sound out of shock. Tears welled up in her eyes, and she felt stuffy in her chest and breathless.

In her heart, Zacharias was as honorable as a god, but he actually initiated a kiss with this female bodyguard. In addition, she could tell that the female bodyguard was highly unwilling.

In her mind, she didn’t remember Zacharias ever being this flirtatious with any woman. He had always been a person of abstinence, and it seemed like no woman was deserving of his initiative and worth. But now, this woman had appeared, and she was by his side.

Biting her lip, Jesslyn fought back the sadness in her chest and left the scene unnoticed.

The next second, Shirley shoved aside the man on her. Breathlessly, she glared at him in anger. “You shouldn’t act recklessly.”

Taking a step back, he felt his lips with the tips of his slender fingers. Accompanied by the smirk on the edge of his lips, he was exuding the air of a jerk-alluring and dangerous at the same time.

When Shirley raised her head, she had a feeling that she was targeted by a ferocious beast.

Then, his phone started ringing, and after checking it for a split second, he paced to the French windows and answered the call while Shirley hurriedly slipped downstairs.

Holding her cell phone and going downstairs, Jesslyn caught sight of Shirley standing at the door and was overwhelmed with jealousy. If Zacharias courts this woman, she will be the future Mrs. Vice President. What a noble status that is, one that countless women can only dream of! And now, this status is lying on a silver platter right in front of this woman. Once she gives the nod, Zacharias will definitely marry her.

Grabbing her purse, she paced to the door with Tony, and Shirley pushed the door open for them. "Thank you, my goddess, Tony hurriedly thanked.

Meanwhile, Jesslyn kept her head lowered as she walked past Shirley. Because she had just cried, she didn't want her to notice that her eyes were swollen.

In the car, Tony realized she had just cried and gasped in surprise, asking, "Jesslyn, what's wrong?"

"Tony, is Zacharias in love with that female bodyguard?" she asked.

Since she already knew this, he nodded. "Yeah, I've been waiting to tell you this, but I was worried you wouldn't believe me."

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Since it's hopeless for me to marry a man like Zacharias in this life, I can only hope for the better in my next life, Jesslyn thought.

Soon, Freddie came over with a document and a gift. Shirley opened the door for him, and he exclaimed in pleasant surprise, "Oh, you're here too, Miss Lloyd?"

Seeing that he was struggling a little with the stuff, Shirley offered, "May I help you with that?"

"Thank you. This is a present for Mr. Flintstone, and it's very precious."

Hastily, Shirley retrieved the package from him, asking, "Who's the sender?"

"An ally. Don't you know that it's Mr. Flintstone's birthday today? He only picked one gift to have it sent over."

Stunned, Shirley thought, What? It's his birthday today? With the birthday present in her hands, she went upstairs with Freddie and into the study. Zacharias was working, and when he saw them coming in together, as well as the gift box in Shirley's hands, a smile spread across his face.

"Your Excellency, this is the present you wanted me to bring over," Freddie said and took out another small gift box from his document bag. "This is my present for you. Happy birthday."

Zacharias nodded at him. "Thank you."

"You're welcome, but it's just a pen," Freddie revealed. "I'm taking my leave first."

He knew that now wasn't the best time to hang around here. The reason Mr. Flintstone purposely had me bring the gift over must be that he plans to give Miss Lloyd the present.

After placing down the present, Shirley wanted to leave as well, but the man stopped her in her tracks. "I have something for you to do."

Taken aback, she spun around and asked, "What is it?"

"Order a cake for me," he instructed.

"Okay." Shirley nodded, pushed the door open, and went out. As Zacharias watched the woman leave the room, his eyes glimmered with anticipation. Will I receive a present from her tonight?

In the meantime, Shirley headed for the car in the parkway after leaving the building. While starting the engine, she contemplated, It's his birthday today. As his subordinate, I shouldn't return empty-handed.

She arrived in the city center, where a famous cake shop was situated. After placing the order for the cake, she had to wait another couple of hours before she could pick it up.

Hence, she went to the nearby mall. Since I already know that it's his birthday today, it seems impolite to skip the present. It's better to buy him a present.

With that thought in mind, she started window shopping. I've already given him a bracelet the last time, so I'll have to buy something else this time. In the end, she chose a tie that cost around 1,300. After she paid the bill, the cashier said something to her when she happened to pick up a call, so she didn't pay any attention to what the cashier said and nodded at her to indicate that she could drop the free gift into the bag.

However, she missed the part when the cashier dropped the male underwear, which was a free gift, into the bag and left after picking up the bag.

With the bag in her hand, she returned to the cake shop and waited a while there until it was 4.30PM. Then, she collected the cake and drove back to the Flintstone Residence.

Meanwhile, at the dorm, Imogen was undergoing her daily training on the open field, where she would train together with a few other team members. At the moment, she was the only girl there.

Although she was a resilient person, something kept bothering her. Now that Shirley was also sent here as a trainee, why was she exempted from the daily training?

After running ten laps, Roy gave everyone a short break before progressing with the next drill.

Imogen breathed out in relief and picked up her bottle to have a drink. When she threw back her head, she saw a car passing by on the street next to her. With her keen eyes, she recognized that Shirley had driven that car before, and through the car window, she saw that the driver was indeed Shirley. However, Shirley didn't notice the people training on the field because she seemed to be deep in thought.

As she watched Shirley drive past breezily, the injustice that she had in her chest somehow ballooned and became more intense all of a sudden.

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Imogen watched as Shirley drove toward Flintstone Residence, her eyes burning with discontent. Then, she recalled that she had taught Jesslyn a lesson and wondered whether Jesslyn reasoned with Shirley. I wonder how Zacharias will handle the situation.

Except when she had a duty, she was usually forbidden to approach the Flintstone Residence. On the other hand, Shirley could come and go from there like it was her home.

This is probably the difference status brings! Imogen thought bitterly. The more terrible her family background was, the more she wanted to change her fate through her own efforts. Because my parents can't help me with anything, I'll have to rely on myself. Her eyes were intense with a conniving glow. For the sake of my future, I'll do whatever it takes to get higher in life.

Shirley rushed all the way back to Flintstone Residence, worried that she would miss Zacharias' birthday celebration. However, when she arrived, she discovered that Zacharias' family was not there.

Warm lighting filled up the entire place, which was peacefully quiet. Holding the cake in her hands, she entered the hall. Besides the servants getting busy in the kitchen, there were no signs of guests anywhere.

Frowning, she wondered, Didn't he send me to get the cake because he's going to celebrate his birthday with his family tonight?

After she set aside the cake, she placed the present on the table as well and headed upstairs. Just as downstairs, it was also quiet upstairs. Then, she proceeded to the study on the third floor. The door was ajar, and she knocked before entering, only to find that the man on the couch was reading a document. A pair of gold-rimmed glasses rested on the bridge of his nose, and under the lighting, he looked wise and calm with an added dash of elegance and regality.

Shirley cleared her throat. "Mr. Flintstone, I've brought the cake back."

“Got it,” Zacharias replied, taking off the glasses with his slender fingers and placing them on the side. Without his glasses, his entire aura took a turn again. Casual, relaxed, and refined- it seemed as though these adjectives were accurate to describe him.

“We’re having dinner together later,” he said, standing up. “I’m going to the gym. Are you coming, too?”

Shirley shook her head in reply but asked in curiosity, “Is your family coming over tonight?”

“No, it’s only us tonight,” he answered.

She looked at him with pity in her eyes because she couldn’t believe that he was going to spend his birthday without a celebration. Given his identity, his friends and family should come in throngs to celebrate his birthday with him!

“Come with me to the gym,” he added, carrying a trace of authority.

Nodding, she agreed to go with him. The gym was on the other side of the second floor. It had 180-degree panoramic glass windows and was well-equipped with fitness equipment.

The man started unbuttoning his perfectly pressed shirt, and Shirley looked the other way when he removed his shirt, but he twirled around and stared at her with a smirk. Under the orange lights, his gorgeous, deep-set features appeared a little blurry, and when their eyes met, she couldn’t help but fall for his charm.

Due to his past injuries, he skipped strength training and only went for a run. Standing next to him, Shirley watched him run topless in his suit trousers, and for some unknown reason, his long legs seemed full of power.

She crossed her arms and stood next to him, waiting until he finished jogging half an hour later. Beads of sweat gathered on his back, and the veins at his neck and arms were clearly visible. With his well-defined muscles that were pumped with testosterone, broad shoulders, and long legs, this man exuded his charm from every living cell.

Closing her eyes, Shirley took a few deep breaths. The last thing she wanted was to be affected by this man. She was the first to go downstairs, and the servants had prepared five different dishes and a soup tonight. Even though it was his birthday, there didn't seem to be anything different from usual.

Is Tony coming back? she wondered. However, it was already late, and he wasn't back yet, so she reckoned that he wasn't coming back tonight. Am I the only one spending his birthday with him? Having never spent a man's birthday alone with him, she started to feel nervous, and the situation was a little ambiguous and awkward for her.

Just then, sounds of footsteps came from the staircase. Upon lifting her head, she saw a freshly showered man who had changed into a black knitted sweater paired with a pair of casual gray trousers.

Beaming with an aristocratic-like laid-back aura, he seemed a few years younger, and even his hair was falling on his forehead casually.

"Sir, the food is ready, a servant informed, stepping forward.

"Thank you. You're done for the day," he said.

Tacitly, she nodded. "Okay."

The moment she was gone, the room fell into pin-drop silence. "Are you sure you're not going to invite your family over to celebrate your birthday with you?" Shirley asked, curious about the situation. He raised his head and smiled. "To me, it's enough just to have you."

"I'm only your bodyguard," Shirley answered helplessly.

"Tonight, don't be my bodyguard. Be my friend instead," he said and pulled out a chair for her. "Take a seat."

She was rooted to the spot, but the man cast her a determined stare, demanding her to go over. Only then did she stride toward him and plopped into the chair that he had pulled out. Then, the man sat next to her. "Let's eat. Once we're done with dinner, we'll share the cake together," he said.

“Would you like to wait for Tony?” she asked.

“He’s not coming back,” he replied.

She blinked blankly. “Did you ask him already?”

“Yeah. His answer sounded confident because he had told his nephew not to return tonight.

There was nothing else Shirley could say, and they began eating in silence. While eating, Zacharias added food to her plate, and she looked at him. Returning the favor, she, too, placed more food on his plate. A smirk tinged the edge of his lips. “Why are you so ceremonious?”

She returned his smile. “I have to. After all, you’re Mr. Vice President.”

“I said that we’re friends tonight. I’m Zacharias, and you’re Shirley. There’s no Vice President in this room,” he reiterated, raising a brow.

Shirley nodded in agreement. “Okay, then I’ll spend your birthday with you as a friend tonight,” she said and pointed at the bag on the couch. “Look, I even prepared a birthday gift for you.”

“I can’t wait to find out what it is,” he said, smiling.

“You’ll find out for yourself later,” she said. The element of surprise would be gone if she had revealed what the gift was.

Zacharias nodded. “Okay, but no matter what you’re giving me, I’ll treasure it.” Her eyes turned into crescents as she smiled. “As long as you don’t mind it.”

“I won’t. It’s a present from you, and I’m more than happy to receive it.”

His deep eyes looked at her, and she lowered her head to avoid looking into them before saying, "You should have told me earlier. I've bought such a huge cake, and it's going to waste."

"We can give it to Roy later and let them have it," he suggested.

She nodded. "That works out because the cake is big enough."

After dinner, Shirley cleared the table and even did the dishes. In the meantime, Zacharias was watching the news on TV. As it was still early, he wasn't in a rush to have the cake. However, a few times, his gaze drifted to the bag, and he wondered what she had prepared as a gift for him.

Around 8.30PM, Shirley came into the room. "Would you like to blow the candle and make a wish first?"

"Sure," he answered with a nod. So, she brought the cake to the coffee table and took out the candles in the shape of the number twenty-nine. At the sight of that, Zacharias couldn't stop himself from grinning. "How did you know that it's my twenty-ninth birthday?"

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Chuckling, Shirley answered, "It's a guess."

"You must have looked up information on me," Zacharias teased.

"That goes without saying," she admitted. "Before coming here, I have to find out what kind of person you are."

"Oh, what kind of person am I, then?" he asked out of curiosity.

All the previous information and reports she had gathered about him flashed through her mind. Looking in retrospect, she concluded that before getting into contact with this man, all the reports that categorized him as an aloof man couldn't exactly define what kind of person he was. But now, she knew what kind of person he was-outstanding, capable, and a little playful. "After working by your side for so long, I have a pretty clear idea about what kind of person you are," she answered.

His smile was increasingly charming. "So, tell me."

"No, I don't want to." She rejected him haughtily, picking up a match and striking it before lighting the candle. When that was done, she paced to the switches and turned off all the lights in the living room.

Some light from the second floor poured down, but it didn't affect the light from the candle, and the room was blanketed under a misty light. Sitting across from him, she said, "You can make your wish now."

"Sing a birthday song for me!" he requested. Struck with embarrassment, she muttered, "I'm not good at singing."

However, he wanted to hear it. "Just a couple of lines will do."

So, she cleared her throat, clapped her hands, and sang softly.

"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you..."

When she finished singing, her face started to burn brightly in the candlelight because he had stared at her unblinkingly while she was singing, his eyes burning with passion.

"Okay, blow the candles and make a wish now," she urged. And don't ask me to sing again.

Only then did he smile and clasped his hands together in front of his chest, resting his forehead lightly on the tips of his fingers, just like a pious, good-looking sculpture. The candlelight danced on his handsome, deep-set features, and Shirley was so mesmerized that she held her breath, forgetting to breathe for a few seconds. Although she wasn't a superficial person, she was overwhelmed by his looks.

While she was staring at him, his eyes suddenly popped open, and he raised his head, catching her right in the moment when she was in a daze. There was a shimmer in his eyes so tender that she couldn't look away immediately..

A grin spread across his face. "I've made my wish. He looked deeply into her eyes as though, telling her telepathically that his wish was related to her. Sensing his hidden message, she urged nervously, 'Blow out the candles."

Zacharias leaned forward slightly and blew softly at the candles, then she stood up and turned on the lights.

The bright lights seemed to lighten her up a little, and she took out two plates before slicing a piece of cake and placing it on his plate. Then, she cut a smaller piece for herself since she wasn't a fan of desserts.

As Zacharias didn't have a sweet tooth, he merely took a couple of bites symbolically and pointed at the bag. "Shouldn't you give me the present now?"

Shirley reached out and grabbed it, passing it to him. "This is for you. I took time to pick it out."

First, he ripped the tape on it and reached into the bag to take out something. The tie was lying on the bottom, and the wrapped underwear was on top of it.

Right now, the thing Zacharias was holding in his hand was a small package. He looked at it curiously. Then, he opened the packaging and retrieved a satin-like item from within.

Opposite him, Shirley had her head lowered, picking out the fruits from the cake instead of watching him.

At the same time, the man's eyes wavered a little at the black underwear spread out flat in his hands. Is this the gift this woman specially picked out for me?

Just then, she looked up for a split second and saw that he was admiring the black underwear in his hands. Her face turned scarlet, and she snatched the underwear from his hands out of panic.